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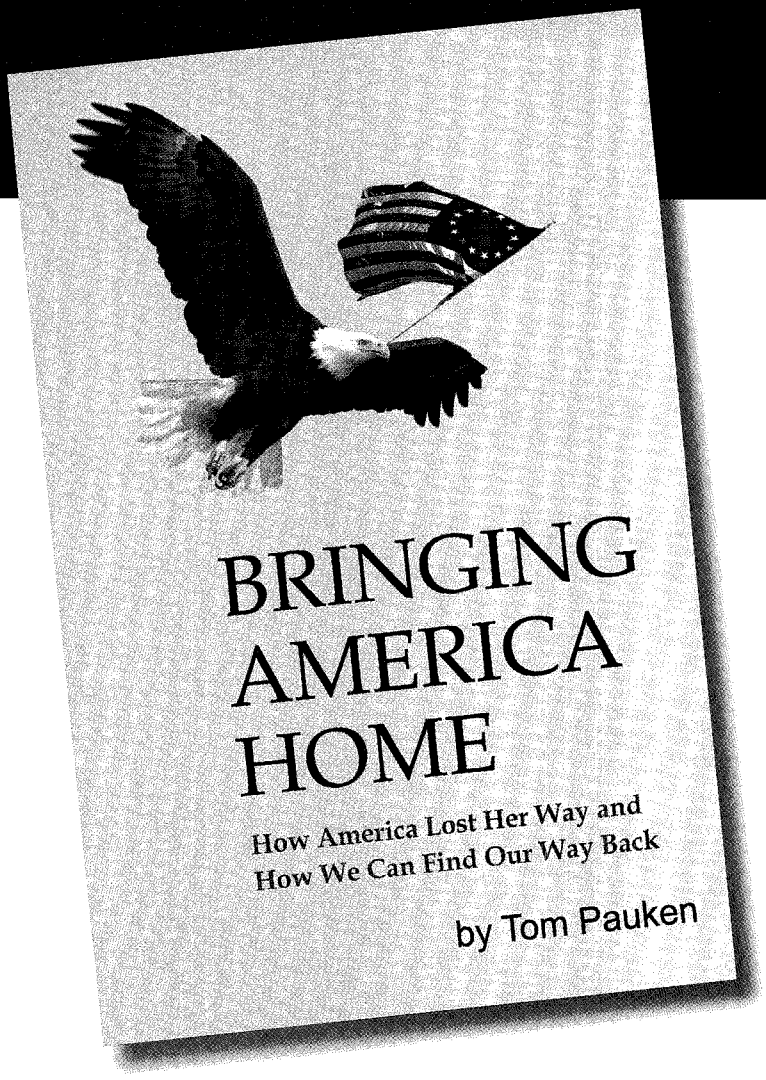

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Marxist Beaches

Although I know well all the disclaimers—a writer's statement does not reflect the journal's official position, a writer is entitled to his opinion in a "free" society, *etc.*—I must express my dismay at Justin Raimondo's gratuitous and mean-spirited insult against a people who, at least on many social and not a few political issues, are in general harmony with the traditionalist philosophy of *Chronicles*. In "Attack of the Hyphenates" (*Between the Lines*, June) Mr. Raimondo vilifies Cuban-Americans as an "obnoxious, volatile, and politically powerful group of Hyphenates." What seems to bother Mr. Raimondo—the close descendant of Hyphenates himself, if his name and decidedly non-Anglo looks mean anything (and they do)—is the commercial blockade against the bloody and ruthless regime of the Castro brothers and their cohorts, which Mr. Raimondo incorrectly attributes solely to the influence of the Cuban-American lobby. This blockade impedes his free enjoyment of "spectacular beaches and cheap prices."

What a vulgar, unprincipled motive for wanting to extend an economic lifeline to what should be the obvious enemy of every *Chronicles* editor, contributor, and reader: a reactionary Stalinist regime that has not ceased to hate and insult this country and export Marxism to various parts of Latin America and Africa. Not to mention the torture and oppression of countless men and women in and out of prison; the economic suffering of the Cuban people for half a century, which only Marxist propagandists (and selfish, foolish *bon vivants*) attribute to the blockade (the real reason is the innate failure of socialist economics); and the large number of those who have drowned in the Straits of Florida seeking a bearable life. No, Mr. Raimondo is only interested in pretty beaches and cheap vacations! No wonder the left has won, as Thomas Fleming stated in the same issue of *Chronicles*. The left has won, and will continue to do so, precisely because of the kind of unreliable "soldiers" we have on the right.

—Robert Carballo
Lancaster, PA

Mr. Raimondo Replies:

The economic blockade of Cuba does not benefit anyone: not Americans, not Cubans, not anyone who wants to see the communist government thrown into the dustbin of history. It helps the Castroites rationalize the deprivation caused by their economic system, by simply attributing all problems to the blockade. It also stokes Cuban nationalism and allows the regime to play the nationalist card against the United States.

I don't think it's even debatable that the Cuban lobby is the one and only reason why the blockade still exists; Castro hasn't exported much of anything, much less "Marxist revolution," in quite a while.

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The Panic of 2011

by John Seiler

If you're old or sick and have a lot of money, I suggest taking a trip out of the country, away from your heirs, until January 1, 2011. And don't tell them where you're going. On that date, the death tax for rich folks goes from the current 0 percent to 55 percent. So your heirs will get less than half of what they would have if you went to the Great Walmart in the Sky a day earlier.

Deep-sixing the death tax is part of the cancellation of most of President George W. Bush's 2003 tax cuts. Republicans in the White House and Congress, in their Karl Rovian sneakiness, put a termination date on their otherwise sensible tax cuts. The reason is now clear: The tax increases are being used in campaigns against Democrats who won't extend the tax cuts.

But wait, there's more. In 2011, the top income-tax rate will rise from 35 percent to 39.6 percent. The capital-gains tax will jump from 15 percent to 20 percent, an increase of one third, choking off vital capital needed for an economic recovery. And unlike the income tax, the capital-gains tax is not indexed to inflation.

Individuals and businesses are taking profits in 2010 to avoid paying higher 2011 taxes. They will stop doing that on January 1. The tax increases will trigger the Panic of 2011, the second dip of the Great Recession.

Things are going to be worse than they were in the Great Depression. Back then, the country's moral fiber was stronger. Far fewer people had mortgages. There were no credit cards. Since the 1930's, the U.S. industrial base, which was still by far the world's largest, has greatly eroded, and it soon will be surpassed by China's.

For America's industrial decline, my *Chronicles* colleague Tom Piatak blames free trade. I blame the lack of a gold standard, excessive regulations, and high taxes. I especially blame the 1971 "Nixon Shock," which ended the $35 gold standard, and the ensuing inflation that jammed the middle class into upper-income tax brackets. But both of us want America to have strong producing industries.

By contrast, most politicians, economists, and bankers are happy with an economy based on folks foreclosing on one another's houses. I'm not joking. One guy I know puts food on a modest table by getting paid one dollar each for pictures he takes of foreclosed houses; 125 pictures per day equals $125, barely enough to survive. Another man I know works for a mortgage company, paying families $1,500 each for not trashing their foreclosed homes before they go and live on the streets.

The economists also tell us that in the summer of 2009 a "recovery" was magically conjured up by President Bush's $700 billion TARP stimulus, President Obama's $827 billion stimulus—all of it borrowed money—and Fed boss Ben Bernanke's doubling of the money supply in 2009.

But the "recovery" money was used to bail out Wall Street at the expense of Main Street. Having a hard time avoiding foreclosure? Tough. Wall Street not only grabbed your money but ran up trillions of credit in your name. Your grandkids will be paying down the debt.

During the "recovery," the official unemployment rate has remained close to ten percent. That number is bogus. To make the unemployment numbers look better for his 1996 reelection bid, President Clinton removed people who had despaired and quit looking for work. If those numbers are included, as they are on *Shadowstats.com*, unemployment is really above 20 percent—a depression level by any measure.

Another major weight on the economy is the Iraq war, with a cost of up to five trillion dollars, as calculated by Nobel economist Joseph Stiglitz; he includes not just "defense" spending but the cost of VA benefits for wounded veterans and cumulative interest on the money borrowed from China and Japan to pay for the war. As during the Vietnam War, we've learned the hard way Sun Tzu's warning: "There is no instance of a nation profiting from prolonged warfare."

Meanwhile, Social Security ran into the red in 2010, seven years earlier than expected, piling higher a national debt that is now rising rapidly above $13 trillion. Obama just socialized medical care, 17 percent of the economy, bringing untold inefficiencies and suffering. For the post-election lame-duck session, Democrats are lusting to pass a "carbon-tax" bill to fight a global-warming threat proved bogus by Climategate. And Republicans are pushing Obama to nuke Iran's alleged nukes, which could send oil prices up to $300 per barrel.

As we saw on September 15, 2008, when the Lehman Brothers bankruptcy precipitated the Panic of 2008, a recession or depression starts with a triggering event that detonates thousands of pounds of TNT-infused economic rot. The next trigger will be pulled on January 1. Even if the Democrats running Congress pass an extension of the Bush tax cuts to reduce their losses in the November elections, they will mess it up somehow. The trigger will still be pulled.

I hope I'm wrong.

John C. Seiler, Jr., is a reporter and analyst for CalWatchDog.com.

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I Spit on Your Grave

FLAMBOYANT William Stewart Simkins, during his professorial heyday at the University of Texas a century ago and more, was known for his long, white mane and his charisma as a teacher of law. He wrote standard textbooks on equity, contracts, and estates. But, dadgum, he took pride all his life (1842-1929) in helping, as an ex-Confederate colonel, to organize and participate in the Florida Ku Klux Klan.

You can guess how sweetly the Simkins name resounds at the university where, for 40 years, he showed off his intellectual firepower.

In July, a priggish UT board of regents, on the say-so of a priggish president newly alerted to the late Professor Simkins' political convictions, voted to run the old boy out of town on a rail—symbolically, to be sure—ordering his name stricken from the dormitory on which it had been bestowed in the 50's. A liberal ex-UT law professor had outed Simkins on account of his "illegal, terrorist behavior during Reconstruction."

I'll deconstruct that Reconstruction bit in a minute. Just to let you know meanwhile: Duly intimidated if well-meaning Texans murmured, "Well, yes, hmmm, Klan, hmmm, s'pose we can't have that, hmmm." Tiny moments sometimes reveal more than large ones do, as to the things humans value and stand—or, alternatively, fall—for. The Simkins affair, if small in itself, speaks loudly of moral invertebracy in times that seem to call for the opposite attribute.

There's nothing like picking on the dead. You can say of them whatever you want, convict them of anything you like. The accusation can lack (as at UT) context, nuance, and basic fairness. So what? The main thing—isn't it?—is to Set Your Face Against the Tarnished Past.

We know what this is all about. Beneath the surface of the regents' mealy-mouthed piety is anxiety that the well-thinking might impute "racism" to the once-segregated University of Texas. The story line is—to cite the hymn—"I once was lost but now am found; was blind, but now I see." And what I see I don't like. The name of a Klansman on a dorm—not to mention campus statues of R.E. Lee and Jefferson Davis. Why, brothers and sisters, we're just at the start of this cleansing enterprise.

Don't know much about history, modern students don't; so, naturally, history lessons involving the late Confederacy are conducted as moral enterprises. The Klan—never mind the circumstances that prompted its founding, *viz.*, the North's reduction of the South to captivity—equates in modern minds to the nativist frenzies of the reconstituted, 1920's Klan. None of Simkins' prosecutors accused him of murder or anything like that. He'd stood against the government—an insurrectionist. Once, as he latterly recounted, he helped rob a train carrying arms being shipped to black militias. Pretty lawless for a law professor.

Foiling the federal troops of arms they were going to point at the local population likely sounded like a really good idea at the time. It can sound plausible even now. Render a defeated people desperate, and desperate things can happen. If you've ever seen a Robin Hood movie, you sense the irony of arguing for the armored lancers over against the pride and needs of the ragamuffins.

The reason the Sherwood "bandits," in 1860's and 70's terms, get no pass for their exertions is the control King John and his merry men exercise over the media and the universities. Not to have acceded to the Union's emancipation program is to have forfeited all title to sympathy. The American liberal mind views the Confederate and post-Confederate South with the same kind of horror our mainstream culture—rightly, I might add, if somewhat overindustriously—views the Third Reich. Try producing *Birth of a Nation* today, Mr. David W. Griffith. You'd be lucky if we let you cut the film up for banjo picks.

Expecting rational consistency from too many modern liberals is getting to be like waiting for Godot: Better bring your lunch. Have we noticed it's also theologically preposterous? William Stewart Simkins was a sinner, the same as John Brown, Bill Sherman, and even A. Lincoln. Not to mention Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson. Victors' justice is all the Simkins row was ever about: exhibiting moral superiority by jumping up and down on the defenseless dead. So the English royalists behaved when they dug up and beheaded Cromwell. There may be more gaps in moral/cultural evolution than are sometimes supposed.

—*William Murchison*

Manufacturing Bust

PRESIDENT BARACK H. OBAMA, if current trends continue, will become the first Democrat to preside over a net national loss in domestic manufacturing jobs since the Bureau of Labor Statistics started reporting monthly employment data in 1939. Seven percent of manufacturing jobs nationwide (873,000) have disappeared since Obama took office. By contrast, manufacturing employment expanded under Democrats Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry S. Truman, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, and James E. Carter. Even William J. Clinton, the first postwar Democrat to preside over a net loss of manufacturing jobs in the South, eked out a 323,000 nationwide gain during eight years in office. U.S. manufacturing employment under Clinton grew at an average monthly rate of 3,365 jobs. It would have to expand at an average monthly rate of 29,101 jobs from now through January 2013 for Obama to record a net gain, an unlikely proposition. Johnson was the last Democrat to preside over manufacturing

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employment growth that robust.

The largest industrial states have recorded manufacturing job losses under President Obama. These include California (121,000), Texas (62,400), Illinois (59,000), Pennsylvania (50,900), North Carolina (50,400), Ohio (46,400), Indiana (29,200), and Michigan (23,900). National manufacturing job losses under President Obama have been broad-based. Durable-goods industry sectors that have recorded job losses under Obama include wood products, nonmetallic mineral products, primary metals, fabricated metals, machinery, computer and electronic products, electrical equipment and appliances, transportation equipment, furniture and related products, and miscellaneous manufacturing. Non-durable-goods sectors that have recorded losses include food manufacturing, beverages and tobacco products, textile products, apparel, leather and allied products, printing and related support activities, petroleum and coal products, chemicals, and plastics and rubber products. No manufacturing sector has yet to record a gain.

Most incumbent Republicans lack the credibility to raise the issue. They were, after all, largely silent on manufacturing job losses under President George W. Bush. Manufacturing contracted by 4.5 million jobs under the Republican Bush, a 27-percent decline unlikely ever to be surpassed. The longest consecutive monthly increase in manufacturing jobs under President Bush was five months (December 2005 through April 2006). Obama has already exceeded that record in 2010, recording six consecutive months of small gains from January to June after monthly declines last year.

Most Republicans have listened for too long to economists who argue manufacturing job losses are unimportant as long as output expands. This argument overlooks countries like China, where manufacturing employment and output have both increased. It downplays the social consequences for families, including a greater government role as good-paying private-sector jobs disappear. It also ignores the political implications of long-term manufacturing job losses in a state such as Ohio, the key to the Electoral College. President Richard M. Nixon, the last Republican to preside over a net national gain in domestic manufacturing jobs, won Ohio's electoral votes twice, as did Clinton. How will these Republicans assail Obama's record to date in Ohio when nearly one in three manufacturing jobs (322,400) disappeared there under his predecessor?

Economists who defend President Obama's economic policies argue he inherited an economy in recession and note that Bush also presided over a net loss of manufacturing jobs. But at some point President Obama's economic policies, as they apply to the domestic manufacturing sector, will be judged on their own merit. And thus far under Obama, national manufacturing employment has declined to the level of spring 1941 (11.6 million), shortly before U.S. entry into World War II.

—Greg Kaza

Aussie Election

Miss Julia Gillard (one takes particular pleasure in applying the honorific "Miss" to so stentorian and charmless a femocrat), the prime minister of Australia, faces an interesting challenge in her bid for reelection on August 21. Goodness knows, the Labor Party that she now leads—and which has been in office since 2007—should win at a canter. Not since 1931 have Australians thrown out a national government after a single term. And Australia has coped with recession and the global financial crisis better than most other Western countries. How much of this comparative success can be attributed to Miss Gillard's predecessor as prime minister, Kevin Rudd, and how much to sheer luck, others must judge. Six months ago, Rudd appeared unstoppable. The opposition Liberal Party had thrown up (such gastric phraseology seems appropriate in the circumstances) its fourth leader inside two years; no obvious rivals to Rudd were visible within Labor itself; and Rudd commanded a healthy lead in opinion polls over every alternative.

Then it all went wrong for Rudd's rule. Tony Abbott, as newly installed Liberal boss, was by no means the New Class empty suit that his two immediate precursors, Brendan Nelson and Malcolm Turnbull, had been. Along with bloodcurdling vulgarity of attire (Abbott saw nothing wrong with posing for the cameras in the most exiguous swimwear, known as "budgie smugglers") and of utterance (he also saw nothing wrong with referring to Miss Gillard's "sh-t-eating grin"), he displayed apparent sincerity in his skepticism about anthropogenic climate change, as well as a certain intellectual curiosity of which no Liberal leader since Sir Robert Menzies' retirement in 1966 had been capable. These characteristics sufficed to give Rudd's administration a fright, and pollsters' findings reflected this. Three other factors aggravated Rudd's difficulties: the unpopularity of the resources tax that he wanted to impose on the mining industry; a shambolic home-insulation program that had led to no fewer than four deaths before the government abandoned it; and ever worse news from Afghanistan, where Australia has had 1,550 troops stationed since April 2009.

What saved Rudd at first was the reluctance of Miss Gillard to mount a challenge. Until this year such a challenge would have been unthinkable, given that Rudd enjoyed 69-percent approval ratings. When these ratings went into free fall, Miss Gillard and her backers struck.

Helping her cause was the fact that Rudd's own popularity, while it lasted, had been personal rather than institutional. It occurred in spite of, rather than because of, his political allegiance. Voters did not

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hand Rudd his comfortable 2007 victory (by a margin of 23 parliamentary seats) over incumbent Prime Minister John Howard through a sudden passionate enthusiasm for Labor—or because they found Rudd's invocations of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's theology, in season and out of season, inexhaustibly interesting—but simply because Rudd was obviously a fresh face, and the increasingly decrepit Howard was obviously not. The 2007 contest, in short, had been in essence presidential rather than party-based. Rudd's own slogan, "Kevin 07," testified to this. When Liberal attack ads started parodying 2007's propaganda by referring to the prime minister as "Kevin O'Lemon," the blow to Rudd's fortunes proved accordingly severe, in a way that it would not have been for a more Tammany-like operator. The Labor machine men whom Rudd had, for the most part, high-handedly ignored at the height of his acclaim took their revenge.

In contrast with Rudd, Miss Gillard was from the beginning the apparatchik's apparatchik. There is no evidence that she has read a serious book in her life. She began her career in a hard-left campus organization, the Australian Union of Students, of which she eventually became leader. (Its achievements included declaring 1983 the "International Year of the Lesbian.") From those heady days she has retained her enthusiasm for Emily's List and suchlike pro-abort rackets, not to mention a gratingly pseudoproletarian speaking voice that can almost strip paint. Later, she worked at the ambulance-chasing legal firm Slater & Gordon. Today, Miss Gillard glories in her atheism (she was raised as a Baptist) and her concubinage. (Her live-in boyfriend, Tim Mathieson, has been unofficially known, ever since the prime ministerial swearing-in ceremony, as the "First Dude.") But never, unlike several of her fellow femocrats, has she given the impression of a desperate allegiance even to misguided principle. Looking out for Number One has always taken precedence.

Readers will soon know whether Miss Gillard's gamble in calling an early election (she was not obliged to call it until November of this year) has worked. There is no doubt that Australia's Liberals are not remotely ready for another turn at government, any more than were "Call Me Dave" Cameron's Conservatives in Britain. They have failed to carry out even the most elementary soul-searching over how and why they permitted John Howard to lead them to disaster three years back. Abbott's only real hope is that enough religious believers will be frightened off by Miss Gillard to hold their noses and turn to the Liberals instead.

—*R.J. Stove*

Thomas Molnar, R.I.P.

On July 10, in Richmond, Virginia, the intellectual historian Thomas Molnar went to his reward, leaving behind an array of gorgeous ruins. By these I mean not his works, which were masterfully crafted and will endure. No, the ruins that Molnar used to guard are the temples, forts, and libraries of our previous civilization, the crumbling traces of what David Gress called (in *From Plato to NATO*) the "Old West," those institutions of order that cannot neatly fit into any ideology—including the Americanism-for-export that "movement" conservatism promoted throughout the Cold War, whose legitimate heir is neoconservatism.

When I would visit him in his Lincoln Center digs, and later in (of all places) suburban New Jersey, Molnar used to shock me with such observations. I'd always believed, before meeting him, that the right/left spectrum was born with the French Revolution, but Molnar casually referred to the institutions of "the right" in ancient Greece and Rome, even Egypt. And again, to this American conservative, his definitions were unexpected. On the right he included, along with the priests and the soldiers, the magistrates—the government! On the left he grouped most rhetoricians and the leaders of the merchant class. Indeed, throughout his writing—from the book that made his reputation, *The Decline of the Intellectual* (1961), to the letters he traded with figures ranging from Albert Camus to the count of Paris—Molnar made clear that he had assimilated Marx's insight that the bourgeoisie is at its heart a revolutionary class. To make this point more vividly, he would say things like, "Calvin was the world's first Bolshevik."

Intellectuals, who began as the burghers' servants and propagandists against the interests of priests, aristocrats, and kings, soon grew impatient with what they saw as the blinkered self-interest and philistinism of their patrons, and turned to utopian ideologies of the left to advance the revolution they'd begun. In *The Counter-Revolution* (1969), Molnar traced the outlines of a movement in the opposite direction, a rebellion of intellectuals who renounced both the modern, bourgeois *paterfamilias* and his prodigal leftist sons. The counterrevolutionary, for Molnar, is a man who looks back behind his feckless father to his ancestors, the dusty portraits hanging on the wall, the soldiers and saints who toiled in service of causes deeper, higher, and to us moderns stranger than a house with a white picket fence. On this point, Molnar echoed the judgment of historian Christopher Dawson, whose famous essay "Catholicism and the Bourgeois Mind" rejects worldly, Puritan prudence in favor of the splendid, quixotic sanctity of the Spanish and French baroque. Here Molnar genially disagreed with another friend, the social philosopher and economist Wilhelm Röpke. "Wilhelm was always too sanguine about the shopkeepers," he told me, smiling sadly. "I knew better."

In *Twin Powers* (1988) and *The Church, Pilgrim of Centuries* (1990), Molnar identified secular "civil society" as the perennial enemy of both Church and state—or of any church or state conceived on tra-

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ditional lines, as a given imposed by God on men whose duty it was to obey. Any churches or states that civil society would tolerate must accept their inferior status, as options chosen by consumers whose allegiance amounted to "product loyalty" driven by "brand identity."

By the time I knew him, Molnar treasured no hopes that any counterrevolution might succeed. One could pick up throughout his writing the bones of such old illusions, and a deep disappointment with figures like Charles Maurras and Charles de Gaulle. But Molnar didn't let bitterness cloud the real achievements of such figures; he spoke warmly and fondly of De Gaulle's political skills and Maurras' profound sense of history. "When Maurras wrote about Marseilles," he told me once, "his sense of the place went back beyond the French, the Frankish, and the Roman periods to the Greek. He knew that it was once and in some sense always will be a port of the Greeks."

Molnar had no patience for nasty eccentrics who pined for National Socialism; he had spent too much time in German internment camps during World War II to treasure any such illusions. Indeed, for a man who wrote so much and so well, Molnar has equally enduring value as an eyewitness. He was in France when, in the wake of the Liberation, Marxists who'd collaborated with the Nazis up through June 1941 rounded up innocent Catholic monarchists by the thousands and murdered them. He hadn't just read that François Mitterrand had been a Vichyite—he remembered it.

Molnar also recalled the high hopes of "movement" conservatives who flocked, as he once had, behind the banner of William F. Buckley, Jr., confident that America's partial, bourgeois revolution could coexist with the many elements of the Old Right that had survived here, or been imported with the waves of Catholic immigration. "There is no other way to put it," Molnar said. "We were fooled." He was perhaps the person least surprised by what some of us saw as the hijacking of the American right by internationalists and utopians. Indeed, he said with a twinkle in his eye of Magyar *Schadenfreude*, "They are the real Americans. They are building the City on a Hill, and they will liquidate anything that stands in their way. This should have been obvious all along." The traditionalist elements in the old conservative coalition were, he said, never more than window dressing, like the portrait of Kaiser Franz Josef hanging in one office at *National Review*, where Molnar was once a senior editor. On that point, he always differed with another friend, Russell Kirk—who was, Molnar said, "far too eager for any sign of hope."

Other young Americans on the right whom Molnar was kind enough to befriend—he was nothing if not generous with his time, and he always suffered us fools, if not always gladly—used to joke with me that we would bring Dr. Molnar our bright, shiny balloons full of illusions so he could pop them. But these had nothing to do with Hope, the infused virtue that sustained Molnar through the long decades of destruction—as he watched his native Hungary ground down by communist occupiers, his beloved France Americanizing herself and inviting in armies of Arabs, and his adopted American home marching straight down the historical path it had laid out for itself (Molnar believed) at the moment of its founding. Having begun life as a fairly secular reactionary, Molnar worked throughout the 1950's at Sacred Heart College in San Francisco, where his profound friendship with that school's president, Mother Helen Casey, spurred him to reexamine the claims of the Catholic Church. He delved deeply into his faith and clung to it, becoming an acerbic critic of the banal revolutionary ferment that began with the Second Vatican Council—whose cultural and political byproducts Molnar saw as the almost final surrender of the Church to civil society, the priests' acceptance of their role as chaplains at a shopping mall. Molnar struck up friendships with many who resisted—sometimes too energetically or imprudently—this revolution, such as Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre.

But Molnar never let the revolutionaries run him out of his Church. Indeed, as the structures of all the earthly institutions that he'd loved were neglected, deserted, defaced, Molnar's otherworldly Hope grew stronger. The collapse of the right was for him a kind of ascesis—a stripping away of everything, finally, that is not God Himself. In the nest of his family, cared for by his loving wife, Ildiko, survived by his son, Eric, two stepchildren and seven grandchildren, remembered for more than 40 books and thousands of articles, Thomas Molnar died almost midway between the anniversaries of the American Revolution and the French. Given all that he thought and wrote, I think he would smile at that. May his soul, and all the souls of the faithful departed, rest in peace.

—John Zmirak

Obiter Dicta

Our poet this month is **Stella Nesanovich**, a retired professor of English at McNeese State University in Lake Charles, Louisiana. She is the author of *A Brightness That Made My Soul Tremble: Poems on the Life of Hildegard of Bingen* and *Vespers at Mount Angel: Poems*, and editor of *Points of Gold: Poems for Leo Luke Marcello*.

The art on the cover and pages 12 and 15 is provided by our interior artist, **George McCartney, Jr.** Mr. McCartney studied at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and received a bachelor's of art from the State University of New York at Geneseo. Since 1997, he has worked in various media in the fields of illustration, graphic design, and textiles. George resides in North Carolina with his wife, Kristin, and their children.

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Break out the Booze?

NO HEALTHY BOY has ever wanted to go to school. I know I did not. Parents who are confronted with a son who has played hooky or feigned a stomachache will sometimes try to reason with him, explaining why it is important to get a good education. These exercises never worked with me, and I would not trust a boy who said they did.

Why *do* we force our children to go to school or try to teach them at home? This question first raised its ugly head in my mind about 25 years ago when I was giving a lecture to the faculty of a private school. My theme was the importance of a classical education, and I had quoted, as I always do, Quintilian's definition of the orator as the *vir bonus peritus dicendi*, a good man skilled in speaking, as the point of departure for my argument that the object of all education is to turn out a human being of a certain type, someone who is morally good and whose learning can be put to the use of his fellows. This is the doctrine that was revived—and distorted—by the civic humanists of the Florentine Renaissance.

To me, the familiar argument seemed self-evident and, in its emphasis on civic utility at the expense of the higher purposes of humane learning, even a bit trivializing. The headmaster, however, was offended. He explained that his school was child-centered, meaning that there was no common objective, no single set of qualities that could define success. In his school, every student would have the opportunity to fulfill themselves [*sic*], to grow up to be whatever it was he or she wanted himself or herself to be. Jokingly, I responded that Jack the Ripper's mother must have believed something like that. More seriously, I asked, if children can be trusted to know what sort of people they should turn out to be, why force them to go to school? Why not let them simply choose how they spend their time, whether in studying Latin and math, playing baseball, watching television, or robbing candy stores?

Why do we go to so much trouble and expense to educate our children? What, in particular, is the point to a university degree that may cost well over $100,000? Most parents would respond, without any reflection, that a degree from a "good" college or university is a prerequisite for any career that will produce a good income. But, it can be pointed out, many people make a good deal of money without ever going off to school. When Dave Thomas, the founder of Wendy's, came to Rockford, the topic of his sermon to the doomed youth of Winnebago County was a familiar message made so popular by Mr. T in the form "Don't be a fool, stay in school." When someone pointed out that Mr. Thomas, although a high-school dropout, had made a lot of money, his answer was, "Yes, but if I had stayed in school, I would have made a lot more." The poor man spent his entire life making more and more money until his death at the age of 69. I cannot forbear asking the musical question posed by Peggy Lee (in a Leiber and Stoller pop song), "Is that all there is? If that's all there is, my friends, then let's keep dancing. Let's break out the booze and have a ball."

Some wiser parents will say that it is not enough for their children to make as much money as Dave Thomas, if they do not learn how to behave at the country club. A man with an Ivy League degree will have met the right people, knows which fork to use, and understands that some of his life should be spent in spending money properly, on tennis and trips to Europe. Besides, where else will he meet the proper mate, if not in a school that attracts the right sort of people?

This argument carried more weight back when the faculty and students at Ivy League schools were well-brought-up WASPs, but a brief visit to Harvard or Yale should drive any such fantasies out of the country-club Republican mind. Still, there is something to this way of thinking, because it raises, however crudely, the question I was putting to the prep-school teachers in Rockford: What sort of adults will emerge from your school, assuming all goes well?

Of course every normal parent wants his children to enjoy a decent income, whether by making money or by inheriting or by marrying it. It is all very well for a rich philosopher like Plato to sneer at comfort and security. Aristotle knew better. Unless he has a roof over his head, no man short of a saint can expect to lead a full life, and it would be foolish to denigrate the little pleasures of people who play tennis and bridge and enjoy a night out at the theater, who can make small talk at a party without confusing small talk about friends or sports with the larger purposes of life.

Meat and drink, golfing and theater-going are not the

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proper ends of human existence, but learning to eat like a Christian or enjoy Shakespeare is part of an education that makes us less bestial and more human. We humans do not live by ourselves or for ourselves. To be truly human we must be of service to kinfolk, neighbors, friends, and fellow citizens. An education that produced men good only for making money and playing golf might fit a nation of anarchists and hedonists, but it will not do for a decent society.

IT IS NOT ENOUGH to have the will to serve, if we lack the capacity. How many times has a well-intentioned Christian or patriotic citizen joined a movement only to make a fool of himself and his movement? This is the hallmark of the American clergy, Protestant as much as Catholic, that their "ignorance and effrontery" (the words the late Robert Nisbet used when he explained to me why he could not go to church) drive away some of the best people in our country. How many pro-life leaders, with their boilerplate arguments, their bad manners and worse grammar, have made the defense of innocent life seem like one more Elmer Gantry con game?

The purpose of rhetorical studies, from ancient times down to recent days, was to equip the middle and upper classes with the tools of persuasion. The late Robert Byrd, though largely self-educated, was the last man in Congress to possess the rudiments of rhetorical training. Many bad things can truly be said of Senator Byrd, but when he believed in a good cause, he not only had the courage to speak out but the ability to speak convincingly. Rhetoric is the art most prized in the City of Man, and even today, when rhetoric has collapsed into salesmanship, it is the glibbest liar who gets the girl, lands the contract, wins the election, and snookers the largest congregation. If educational standards had not entirely collapsed, Rick Warren and Barack Obama would be selling their snake oil in a cheap carnival, and Ann Coulter and Bill Kristol would be practicing law somewhere in the hinterlands instead of making fools of themselves and each other in print.

If rhetorical training could only raise the level of public lying, it would be worth all the trouble and expense, but when we consider the decline in civic eloquence from Adams and Jefferson to the Bushes and Obama, it is enough to inspire a teacher or parent to force the students to memorize the Cicero their ancestors could quote: "*Quo usque tandem abutere, Catilina, patientia nostra? quam diu etiam furor iste tuus nos eludet? quem ad finem sese effrenata iactabit audacia? . . . O tempora, o mores!*"

How far, in the end, will you go, Barry, in abusing our patience? How long will that rage of yours make fools of us? And where will it end, your unbridled audacity of hope that throws its weight around? . . . What times these are, what character we have!

Even the loftiest statesman is something of a bore, if he has failed to cultivate his mind and sensibilities. The benefits of philosophy are obvious: It is the high road to truth and reality, and the main reason for the collapse of intelligent discourse in America is the abandonment of philosophy, by which I do not mean the gibberish taught by Hegel and Nietzsche, much less Sartre and Husserl. In Catholic intellectual circles, the substitution of phenomenology for Thomism is an unmitigated disaster.

Learning to eat like a Christian or enjoy Shakespeare is part of an education that makes us less bestial and more human.

Well, a Christian might ask, is that all there is? All this dedication to civic virtue or even philosophy is a distraction from the requirements of a Christian life. Surely, a life devoted to prayer and the practice of charity is the only proper life for man. I would answer yes—and no. Cloistered monks and nuns are free to devote themselves to a higher calling, but even they would not last very long without the strong arm of Christian soldiers to defend them and the charitable hearts of Christian men and women to support them. For the rest of us, however, it is a very grave mistake to attempt to bypass our ordinary responsibilities and to live as if we were in Plato's Republic or the Kingdom of Heaven. There is a kind of pietism that is little better than an excuse for cowardice and failure.

The everyday virtues of parents and citizens are not to be despised. The loyalties to family and commonwealth we learn to practice and the humane learning we strive to acquire foreshadow, if we live successfully, the higher loyalties and learning that are the final aim of human life. If it is our duty to develop the powers needed to build and preserve a City of Man worthy of our human nature, our development is stunted if all our speechifying and politicking and soldiering is not done in aid of our higher duty, to prepare in our hearts and minds a place for the City of God, which cannot be built with bricks or laws any more than a god can be made with human hands. ◆

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George McCartney, Jr.

Academic Sins

by John Willson

Frank: "They threw me out for plagiarizing."
Ernest: "You were stealing songs?"
Frank: "No, I was taking notes."
—from a Frank and Ernest *cartoon*
(Frank has been expelled from music school)

A GRADUATE STUDENT ASKED if he could take a reading course; sitting at my feet, I thought, talking with the rabbi. He was in his early 30's, a little older than I was, and he had taught in a private school for boys for ten years. It was time for him to take a year or so off and gather his wits about him and learn a little of what a decade of teaching had taught him that he did not know. We agreed that he would read 15 books—one each week for the semester—and write short reviews that would be the basis of our once-a-week discussions. It wasn't long before I looked forward to that conversation more than anything I was teaching that semester: His essays were so good, his disposition so even, his humor so engaging.

We shook hands one Thursday after a particularly good discussion; I was walking back to my desk and spotted a page on the floor. I picked it up and glanced at it rather casually, and then a two-by-four hit me upside the head. It was a copy of a short review (from the *Times Literary Supplement*) of the book we had just been talking about, and it was identical in every word and punctuation mark to the review he had presented to me as his own work. Rather than run after him and strangle him to death and deprive my family of a husband and father, I sat down and eventually decided that I must first talk with my wise wife.

She said two things to me that changed my life as a teacher. "You must confront him," she said, "and find out if you can why he did this." And what turned out to be even more important, she said, "Who was injured by what he did? Was it you, or the university, or—?" The answer to the latter question is, of course, if there is a class of students, one's classmates. But in this case, no classmates, no foul. Right?

He told me the next day (trembling) that he was so afraid

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of what he perceived were my high standards (I was a bear in those days) that he gave in, that the temptation was too great for him, that he could cheat and cover it over with his proven personality. I remember shaking with moral indignation and self-righteousness, but staying calm and telling him that he would be quietly expelled from the graduate school (a teacher of boys who cheats!) but not publicly stripped of his coat buttons on the front lawn. This was as clear a case of plagiarism, of self-conscious cheating, as I have ever encountered in a very long life in this profession. And I am not sure to this day that I did the right thing.

I'VE KNOWN TEACHERS who have written paragraphs, even pages in their syllabuses warning students about the sins they might commit or omit; I've known others who have been willing to spend hours, days, weeks in the library (or now, online) chasing down suspected plagiarists; and others who have even engaged sentinels in their classes to smell out or root out and report on their sinning classmates.

There are many better ways to spend your time.

First, read Judge Richard Posner's fine book, *The Little Book of Plagiarism*. You will find that plagiarism is historically, morally, and legally ambiguous and relative. He says, "'plagiarism' turns out to be difficult to define." Thomas Jefferson probably took too many words from Locke, and from his colleague John Dickinson, when he wrote the Declaration of Independence, which itself was only one in a series of such declarations, and yet we immortalize his words. (This is my example, not Judge Posner's.) But Judge Posner also says that the "plagiarist does not play fair." "Concealment is at the heart of plagiarism." It surely is, but it also has an "extraordinary historical and cultural variability." Shakespeare copied, for example. Why, asks Judge Posner, would any writer of works intended to entertain want to be "original"?

(A note here: The most erudite, challenging, and hilarious essay I have ever seen on literary plagiarism is the late John Greenway's "The Honest Man's Guide to Plagiarism" in the December 21, 1979, issue of *National Review*.)

"And caution," Posner says, "must be the watchword when the concept of plagiarism is extended from literal copying to the copying of ideas." The American Historical Association, among other august chattering bodies, has declared the copying of an idea to be cheating. Is an idea original? Who has had an idea that nobody else ever had? A colleague of mine once wrote in a grant application, "In twenty-five centuries of Platonic scholarship, no one has seen what I have seen." Then, before his book was written, another appeared that completely preempted it.

One of the many things that being a professional historian for 50 years has taught me is that there are no new ideas. The book of Genesis pretty much lays them all out. Test any event—the Scopes Trial of 1925, for example—and you will find that every interpretation of it was presented at the time. We rediscover ideas, and therefore have to place every discussion of cheating about them in that perspective.

It is our nature, both teacher and student, to want to excel, to impress our intended audience, and sometimes this causes us to become a little reckless—to take that chance. But plagiarism attacks our souls. How we react is what counts.

Why would students want to plagiarize? The reasons are obvious and simple. They don't have enough time to finish the assignment. They don't understand it. They want a good grade, since grades are the way they are judged for their moral and intellectual worth. They are playing games with the professors who have already said that they will hunt them down. They just want to get away with something that authority condemns. They are lazy. They are stupid. They are made in the image of God and have rebelled against Him. They are human beings with one nature.

Judge Posner thinks that the left is "soft on plagiarism." He thinks this because leftists tend to be committed both to relativism and to a strange position that gives them authority over truth that is at once relative and absolute insofar as they wish to define it. When words became property, sometime after the Enlightenment, using them became proprietary. So truth is relative, but using the words that other people use to describe it is absolute. And then it is hard to define what is absolute about it. It is a conviction of the left that there is no such thing as human nature (this is perhaps the defining characteristic of the left), and so in a curious way the prevailing academic culture must set itself an "objective" standard concerning plagiarism that has no basis in either tradition or nature. The left tried to define it, but the right now tries to enforce it. Conservatives so often are the

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conservators of the last generation's progressive ideas.

Fr. Walter Ong, S.J., one of the great and underrecognized geniuses of the 20th century, once said that "texts are inherently contumacious." Although he probably meant that texts are "rebellious," difficult to control, he may also have meant that they swell and are promiscuous. (I knew Father Ong, and he was given to irony.) They seduce all of us at one time or another.

Something I have heard from scores of colleagues over the years is, "Choose the second-best textbook for your courses. Save the best one for your lectures." Most of the teachers I have known—several hundred at least—have used this bit of wisdom to get past a heavy teaching load, struggling under poor pay and often demeaning working conditions. In other words, they cheat, and they are often the ones who are "soft on plagiarism" or, interestingly, some of the toughest on students they suspect of cheating. Every time a teacher enters a classroom and gives out information or wisdom he has gained from a source he does not acknowledge, he is a plagiarist. Texts are, indeed, contumacious.

It is easy to be cynical about this form of cheating. Tom Lehrer is mostly forgotten by this generation. On this subject, he sang,

> Plagiarize!
> Let no one else's work evade your eyes,
> Remember why the Good Lord made your eyes,
> So don't shade your eyes,
> But plagiarize, plagiarize, plagiarize . . .
> Only be sure always to call it, please, "research"!

He sang it in a Russian accent. The song was "Lobachevsky."

Dorothy Parker, whose vicious wit spared almost nobody, said that "The only *ism* Hollywood believes in is plagiarism." I attended the world premier of *The Paper Chase* in 1973 and sat next to its director, James Bridges. The film is a gem, the best movie about teaching I have ever seen. I asked Mr. Bridges how he came to make this particular film, and he said that he was a writer for the Alfred Hitchcock television show in the 60's, and that they worked around the clock trying to get scripts right week after week, and one day he was sued for plagiarism. He had no idea he had stolen somebody's material, but he hired an attorney to check it out. The lawyer settled the case for $1,500 and then presented Mr. Bridges a bill for $26,000. "I decided," said Mr. Bridges, "to make a movie about lawyers."

Lawyers and academic associations have a lot to do with plagiarism, and we should not forget that. Judge Posner points out that "Unconscious plagiarism is a more plausible defense to a charge of copying someone's idea or tune, as distinct from his words, without attribution." But legalities aside, the issue comes down to culpability. Cheating.

The American Historical Association denies this (as do most other academic associations). It insists that intent has nothing to do with it. What's in the heart is hard to prove, so allowing plagiarists the cop-out with a "whoops" factor gains nothing for academic integrity. The AHA has famously hounded several of its well-known members (and several historian nonmembers)—the biographer Stephen Oates, to name one—but has found that it must almost always shift definitions to get what amounts to a credible case. It has always seemed to me that, to be sensible about any serious charge, we must try to look into the sinner's heart, as hard as that may be.

THE MOST FAMOUS CASE of cheating is that of Martin Luther King, Jr. *Chronicles* covered this from the beginning and showed courage that few magazines of record have ever demonstrated. Dr. King cheated all his academic life, in print and in speeches, in and out of college and graduate school. He had to know what he was doing, and whatever excuses his apologists try to present, he was, simply put, a cheater. And he was also a man of great courage and, in a way that is difficult to define, a moral man. I think that his case is a good one for teachers to consider.

Theodore Pappas, who blew the whistle on Dr. King, reflected later about the experience in *Plagiarism and the Culture War*: "No one suffers the pangs and arrows of outrageous fortune like the exposer of a famous plagiarizer, for it is he, not the sinner and certainly not the sin, who becomes the center of debate . . . " It was true that Mr. Pappas faced things that Dr. King should have faced. But I want to go back into the plausible circumstances of Dr. King's life and ask: If he was indeed a moral man in some large sense, is there something we can imagine about his early years that might have helped him to cheat less, or not at all?

I now speak to teachers, and not to print or internet editors. The problems of plagiarism that come up in public and legal places are the subjects of technical things that have little to do with how teachers do their jobs. Agonizing over the graduate student I sent into outer darkness, a few years later it came to me that I had put him to the test. If there is a true human nature—and there is—then we should admit to it and put it to the test as infrequently as possible. Please, lead me not into temptation! As right as Mr. Pappas is about the scorn heaped upon exposers, it

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is also true that to accuse a student or a colleague of plagiarism—even to accuse, not necessarily even to prove—is to put a mark of Cain on him.

Judge Posner says, "Plagiarism is considered by most writers, teachers, journalists, scholars, and even members of the general public to be the capital intellectual crime." It isn't. Plagiarism is relative. Cheating is also relative, but not in the hearts of teachers or their students.

THERE ARE MANY SENSIBLE THINGS teachers can do to lessen the temptation for students. Never repeat an assignment. Students and teachers are always in competition on this point. Every assignment can essentially be the same, but if the teacher has any imagination whatsoever the students will not recognize the subtle differences. Never repeat a paper topic, and never assign a paper on "whatever you want to write." Never repeat a quiz or essay question. Make assignments clear and precise. It will create more work for you. You will have less time to write, less time to think, less time to play with your children. But if you follow these simple rules, students will have to go to such extraordinary means to cheat that you will not need to worry about it. They are doomed anyway. And you will be a better teacher.

The other side of this is that the teachers who present borrowed material as their own are also doomed. Plagiarism goes both ways. ("He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone . . . ") I've seen so much hypocrisy, so much anguish, so much confusion about this particular academic sin that it might be best just to sit down and start over. Isn't it curious, for example, that the students at my former institution (which is, on the whole, a very sensible one, with much integrity) sign an honor code, but faculty do not?

It is our nature, both teacher and student, to want to excel, to impress our intended audience, and sometimes this causes us to become a little reckless—to take that chance. But plagiarism attacks our souls. How we react is what counts. The strong and secure will resist it, the weak and insecure will succumb to it. Relying on abstractions, legal or moral, to describe cheating will never solve the problem. This is a plea for common sense.

John Willson is professor emeritus of history at Hillsdale College.

Julian at Prayer

by Stella Nesanovich

Julian of Norwich in her garden, autumn 1373

Amid the thyme and lavender, the scents
Of rose and anise, I find a thistle
Hiding among tender leaves—the weed
With the good seed, chaff among the wheat.
The rosemary for our mutton shall not be spoiled
By that spiked head, though it may suck water.
Yet I will not pluck it. It may offer a lesson.

Norwich's round tower seems to spin above me
With its parapet and crenulations.
I no longer seek the window and its arch
I considered when a child, imagining
A lady imprisoned as penance,
Or the ghost of the old rector before
Good Father Will, who grants forgiveness,
Urging I keep to prayer without remorse.

Those gray walls serve as holy symbol:
How God surrounds us, stone by stone,
To hold us safely and fulfill all needs.

Even thistles amid the herbs and flowers
Find protected spots to grow.

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George McCartney, Jr.

The Uses of a Liberal Education

by Catharine Savage Brosman

On September 1, 1939, an Englishman named Harry Hinsley, walking between two lines of Nazi soldiers, crossed slowly and nervously the bridge connecting Kehl in Germany with Strasbourg in France. He made it to the French side before the border was closed. He had been warned to leave. It was none too soon; German troops had already invaded Poland, and Great Britain would declare war on Germany on September 3. Hinsley, an undergraduate at Cambridge, had spent his vacation across the Rhine learning some German. His field of study at Cambridge was medieval history; he worked on charts and other documents. What does one do with a history degree? Take up a teaching post immediately, or stay and get a postgraduate degree and then go teach, or remain forever within the college walls? Or seek other career opportunities—scholarly editing, journalism, publishing, museum or library work, a life in the clergy?

Hinsley did not yet need to choose. That autumn, he was interviewed and hired by representatives of what became Bletchley Park—the headquarters of the Government Code and Cypher School. He was only 20 years old. Some of his colleagues in the campaign to break Germany's Enigma codes were similarly young: an Oxford mathematics graduate named Peter Twinn, aged 23, and an 18-year-old, Richard Pendered, who, after studies at Winchester, had been about to enroll at Cambridge. While Hinsley (who after the war returned to St. John's College as an historian) was helped by these two students of mathematics and others, it was he who masterminded the operation by means of reconstructing the German codes.

Among the older staff members at Bletchley Park was an eccentric former classics scholar, "Dilly" Knox, who also knew German and who liked poetry—while driving, he would recite Milton's "Lycidas." How could an acquaintance with poetry possibly be of any use? Well, during the previous war, in 1917, when he was at work on the naval flag code used by the Germans, he recognized that a piece of code was the enciphered version of a poem by Schiller, which then served as a crib. At Bletchley Park there

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was also Mavis Lever, who had at age 18 interrupted her study of German at London University; she did not work on German, however, but on Italian Naval Enigma, which she was instrumental in breaking. The work of these cryptographers and others doubtless shortened the 1939-45 war, eased conditions during its course in Britain and elsewhere (by helping protect merchant shipping in the Atlantic), and saved countless lives.

The uses to which any education can be put are a function of what that education is. (Hence remarks below on what it should not be.) With the mind as both tool and target, a true liberal-arts education allows us to go beyond what we know and what we are. If properly taught, history (often deemed useless), languages (studied too much as a traveler's aid), good literary prose (not today's degraded fiction and propaganda), poetry, philosophy (including political philosophy), art history, musicology, mathematics and the mathematics-based sciences—all these develop the mind in reasoning, memory, knowledge, acumen, powers of assessment, and imagination. They prepare the learner to confront material, systematic or otherwise, that is at the outset unfamiliar, perhaps resistant. A good poem, for example, which is a small, detailed system, the principles of which may be obvious (rhyme scheme, meter, stanzas) or less so (metaphors, subtle references, interior echoes, a kind of poetic argument), may resist readers at first but yield to closer study. The Bletchley Park staff had native intelligence but also solid and broad training in fields of the liberal arts and sciences, and thus had learned how to learn. They could acquire new knowledge quickly, understand or imagine others' reasoning, assess a field, see both detail and outline, and conceive solutions. Moreover, they could harness language for their purposes.

In other words, as the French novelist Michel Butor observed about his literary endeavors, a genuine liberal education makes you more intelligent. A mental Sisyphus, you develop the "muscles" of your mind, which, provided with facts and concepts, can think, invent, and tackle a variety of challenges and puzzles, including entirely novel ones. This is important. How many of today's students, often committed early to vocational subjects such as business and finance or a program of fluff (so-called communications, sociology, or "gender" or ethnic studies, for instance), will remain for the next four or five decades in the occupational field for which these studies have, in fact or purportedly, prepared them? Many will be obliged to switch careers or face redesigned jobs, often with a consequent loss of time, income, satisfaction. Thus, whereas students and their parents commonly believe they should study what will get them certified as soon as possible for work in a practical field, it would be more useful to prepare mentally for almost inevitable changes and disruptions. Even medicine and law will continue to change, perhaps greatly: medicine, as a result of scientific discoveries, ingenious technical applications, new legislation and insurance arrangements; law, following new and reinterpreted statutes and constitutions. Knox, Hinsley, Lever, various mathematicians at Bletchley had no idea concerning the use to which their mental skills and knowledge would be put.

We are in great need of well-trained minds with critical ability (and of courageous hearts), since the enemies are not only at our borders but also within. We should beware, however, of educational rhetoric today (in college propaganda materials, for instance) that speaks of "developing critical thinking." In the new coded language, *critical* has come to mean hostile "deconstruction" of Occidental culture, institutions, and thought, especially white "patriarchy." The cultish enthusiasts of "critical thinking" are, in fact, weak in critical faculties, as an outsider can discover by perusing their writings.

Liberal studies are practical. They have civic and cultural use and a personal function, the two often intertwined. If properly defined and well carried out by learned and intellectually honest teachers, liberal studies ground students in disciplined thinking and free them from ignorance, foolishness, and dangerous illusions, thus preparing them to live intelligently and responsibly. Such studies even save time: Stendhal's demonstration of the mechanisms and consequences of political venality is concise, persuasive, and entertaining, unlike sociology textbooks. Where traditional subjects have been thrown out, and rigor and objectivity are not stressed, the mind achieves little; it is easily misled, warped, or lured into a false appraisal of its capacities. In the milieu that Jonathan M. Smith and Jim Norwine, two antirevisionist geographers writing in *Academic Questions* (Fall 2009), call "the bawdy saloon of progressive politics, cultural nihilism, and subjective epistemology," so-called education is in fact dangerous for students and poisonous for society, though profitable for its purveyors.

Subjective epistemology amounts to the pernicious belief that opinions have fact-value and the stubborn rejection of the ancient principle that judgments, to be valid, must be founded. What remains is an indiscriminate acceptance of everything—except what the purveyors of "progressive" politics do not like. Consequently, there is no judgment—merely imitative, tropistic reaction, with a usual preference for everything permissive or base. Insofar as feeling is to

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be part of judgment—and there is no implication here that emotion should be removed from the range of legitimate human responses—it, too, must be properly weighed and justified, not merely the reaction of an impulsive, silly biped. Says the student devotee of *Beloved*: "I just feel that Toni Morrison is a great writer." If one accepts the view of minimalist sculptor Donald Judd (who disfigured some fine desert landscape in Presidio County, Texas, with his huge horrors), to wit, "If you call it art, it is art," the only result will be degraded taste and judgment tending toward nihilism. Think of the late Mr. Mapplethorpe.

Classes in the humanities and social studies have become a cursory examination of materials (good or less good) for the purpose of forming and expressing opinions—by mindlessly but militantly liberal instructors and then students, who write up their derivative views in papers that suffice for passing grades. In multicultural studies especially, *a priori* suppositions, clichés, and shibboleths rule. Though students believe they think for themselves, they are, in fact, often docile and content to regurgitate platitudes and classroom dogma, thereby demonstrating that they belong to what Harold Rosenberg called "the herd of independent minds." "Question Authority," says a bumper sticker. Whose authority? Those duped by this precept—victims but accomplices, too—willingly assail family, church, the Boy Scouts, and patriotism but can eagerly swallow and process a whole stinking stew of ravings by an unkempt neo-Marxist or a feminist determined to subvert traditional institutions. What could be easier? And ease is the other side of the subjectivity coin.

The reduction in core requirements favors these trends. The University of Arkansas recently reduced its general-education demands for the B.A. from 66 hours to 35, eliminating foreign-language requirements and watering down science. Likewise, standards of grading have been lowered and requirements relaxed. ("I just feel that Bernanos is too hard, and we should not have to read this.") Some years ago it was reported that at Duke University, one of the hotbeds of postmodernist brainwashing, more than 60 percent of the graduates were awarded honors. What extraordinarily gifted instructors and students! Soon everyone will graduate at the top of his class and be equally superior. That may be all right in "gender" studies; I wouldn't like it in, say, ophthalmological surgery or suspension-bridge engineering.

Cultivation of self-image is another unfortunate strain in humanities courses (hence the popularity of creative-writing curricula). A philosophy professor of my acquaintance taught yearly "The Philosophy of Self." It had a very large enrollment, much larger than the courses on Plato and Aristotle offered by a learned and well-regarded teacher. Such self-cultivation is, by and large, useless or, worse, a harmful indulgence; it certainly is not mind-training. As for such abominations as "feminist mathematics," no comment is necessary.

A proper liberal-arts education is an expensive enterprise for students, parents, state, philanthropists, society as a whole. (That is unless it is the result of self-teaching—reading, reflection, short courses, exchanges with others. Autodidactic training is now better than much of what can be purchased.) Four expensive years, with little to show except arcane erudition, mental agility, and awareness—quite some holiday, right? What, however, is the social and political price of ignorance, blindness, incompetence, and the total neglect of our patrimony? Alas, we see too well.

IT MIGHT BE OBJECTED that, if the college population studied nothing but ancient philosophy, medieval history, English poetry, theoretical mathematics, or similar subjects, there would be insufficient numbers of technicians, managers, and others to run the country. (Not that such have done a fine job recently.) Ah, but if the college population were reduced to what it should be—those who really want higher learning, not just a vocational certificate—then society could easily afford to provide, with less indebtedness, the sort of education sketched out here and would be better off for it. These educated people would in many cases be more imaginative, attentive, and successful than those ostensibly trained for such posts. (In a May *New York Times* article, Jacques Steinberg urged consideration of "Plan B: Skip College.") If the present trend continues and nearly everyone aged 18 attends college, as MM. Clinton and Obama have wished, and thus vocational instruction elbows out the rest, at least students could be obliged to take courses in ethics that start with the ancients and include, for example, just-war principles.

Society is served by the development of minds and mastery of liberal branches of knowledge; national survival might depend on such education. For most of us, however, it is impossible to contribute much to this nation of 300 million, which groans under a yoke of atomized machine-and-mob rule and oligarchic control—and presently suffers, as Tom Piatak pointed out in these pages ("Bringing Back the Old Economy," *Views*, April), from the negative effects of globalization. The ancient ideals and modes of civic life on which our republic was founded have been so abandoned or crushed, and the economic system so altered, that few of us can, as the expression goes, make a difference.

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What we can do with our learning is exercise our good judgment and live well for ourselves, our families, those in our circles, and others whose welfare may be partly in our hands. To say that begs the question: What is living well? Merely a personal choice, some would argue; one may choose to watch a monster-truck derby, read a trashy best seller, attend cult gatherings at sweat lodges, or use "recreational" drugs in the evening, or, in contrast, meet discerning friends at dinner ("Conversation forms the mind," wrote Pascal), visit a worthwhile art or science exhibit, spend time with children, listen to music (the time-honored kind), or read the classics, history, and good contemporary books. As Thoreau asserted in "Reading," "Books are the treasured wealth of the world, and the fit inheritance of generations and nations. Books stand naturally and rightfully on the shelves of every cottage." William Chase echoed him in *The American Scholar* (Autumn 2009): "Knowledge of those books [standard literary works] and the tradition in which they exist is a human good in and of itself." The whole point of the learning promoted here is that it enables us to go beyond indiscriminate choices in a life that otherwise risks being "nasty, brutish, and short" (think of young Hollywood "celebrities" recently deceased) or at least tedious, and to distinguish the good from the less good—then share this understanding with others. Dilly Knox of Bletchley Park had liked Schiller's and Milton's poetry for its own sake, for what it offered his mind and heart. (Wallace Stevens observed, "The purpose of poetry is to contribute to man's happiness.") It was almost serendipitous that Knox could use his acquaintance with poetry to break a code. Almost serendipitous, but not entirely, because the classics and poetry had afforded training as well as pleasure—the sort of training that allowed him to identify a clue. As Robert Friedel wrote in a 2001 essay, "Serendipity is no accident."

With luck and prudence, one's mind lasts as long as one's life, and a true education can provide decades-long satisfaction through intellectual grasp and aesthetic pleasure. The cultivation of one's garden is the cultivation of oneself. What will our fellow countrymen do with themselves in a future time of leisure, or, if like Dante, in exile? Watch reality shows or play video games? My grandfather, a physician and researcher who retired at age 70, read, traveled, listened to recorded music on his Zenith phonograph, and wrote for the next 24 years. His previous endeavors as a humane scientist and lover of knowledge had not only enabled him to serve others well but prepared him wonderfully for his old age.

Since this is *Chronicles*, I am preaching to the converted, except for those few who may have come to scoff but "remain'd to pray." I invite readers to reflect on these matters, however, and make these points to others, especially young, naive acquaintances unfamiliar with such thinking; then, if circumstances allow, repeat these arguments before school boards, librarians, institutional trustees (when universities beg for money), legislators, and others in power, and thus prove me partially wrong about "making a difference."

Catharine Savage Brosman is poetry editor for Chronicles.

A Talisman Against Falling

by Stella Nesanovich

It must be a spirit that catches you,
keeps you from falling, stumbling
toward the ledge of tall buildings,
lifts you after tripping face forward
on rugs in halls, sunken living rooms,
upending tables and lamps.

Perhaps it is fear itself that cautions:
avoid elevator shafts, high expressways,
mountain roads coiling like kites
toward heaven. High up, dizziness
begins, spins out of control. Your fall
will break circuits of trees, chevroned leaves
like cascading walls unblocking descent.

An unbalanced element of earth, some say
and urge crawling to steady your vision.
It's the sky, you want to tell them:
its limitlessness and endless promise,
and the sudden nudge to jump from heights:
Haven't you felt it, the desire to leap?
Sweet earth beckons, pulls you to her bosom,
pushes you forward with grace. She wishes
you knew the rapture she offers: salt and brine
of water-fringed beaches, damp, yielding sand.

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Okinawa Occupied

by Allen Mendenhall

OKINAWA IS A BEAUTIFUL ISLAND in the Pacific. Although part of Japan, it is culturally and historically distinct, having a long list of diverse occupants and occupiers. The Allies won a decisive victory at the Battle of Okinawa in 1945. Following a massive amphibious invasion by U.S. forces, the battle was one of the bloodiest of World War II. More people died on Okinawa than during the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki combined.

After U.S. forces defeated the Japanese, soldiers from both countries wreaked havoc on the island, allegedly raping up to 10,000 Okinawan women. The raping of Okinawan women by servicemen has continued. The most notorious incident occurred in 1995, when three U.S. soldiers beat, bound, and raped a 12-year-old girl, sparking massive demonstrations against U.S. occupation.

Okinawa is the ward of a government (Japan proper) that is, in matters military, the ward of another government (the United States). To influence political affairs that take place on the island, Okinawans appeal to bureaucrats off the island. Chalmers Johnson speaks of a "permanent collusion of the United States and Japan against Okinawa." Indeed, for 65 years the U.S. military has had a "free ride" off Okinawan taxpayers, who foot the bill for a large portion of U.S. facilities, including utilities, maintenance, and upgrades. Next to the base are golf courses, fast-food chains, football fields, and shopping malls—luxuries that are significant on an island where land is hard to come by.

Whether the U.S. presence in Okinawa is necessary is a contentious issue. Many argue that the base boosts the local economy, generates thousands of jobs, floats small businesses, and provides rent payments and public-works money. If they mean that Okinawa produces more revenue with the U.S. military presence than it would without, they could be right. No one can say for sure. Perhaps tourism would have been a stronger industry in Okinawa without U.S. soldiers running around. Or perhaps Japan would have found a better use for the island. What we can say with certainty is that the United States has other viable alternatives to Okinawa. For instance, the senate of the Northern Mariana Islands, a U.S. territory, recently voted to welcome the U.S. Marines currently stationed in Japan.

Lt. Gen. Terry Robling, who commands the U.S. Marine bases in Japan, argues that "We provide the Japanese government with a credible deterrence force—a highly effective, highly trained and very mobile force that is very strategically located." Robling adds that "the stability of the region has been caused by our presence here. Over 50 years now there's been relative peace in the Asia region." That is like claiming that a lack of new terrorist attacks on U.S. soil is evidence that George W. Bush's antiterror policies worked. There is no evidence—or, rather, the only evidence is the absence of evidence. There is no way of knowing what might have been if Japan instead of the United States had maintained control over Okinawa.

Robling might be correct in saying the United States deterred some conflict. But the U.S. military has also caused harm over time. Even if it made Japan safer from outside forces, it endangered many on the island. According to Defense Ministry data, U.S. military personnel were responsible for 7,277 accidents and criminal cases dating back five years from March 2009. Of these, 6,180 occurred while U.S. personnel were off-duty. The U.S. presence in Japan may also have triggered a resurgence in nationalism among countries that have unstable relations with Japan—North Korea and China, for instance, which have good reason to be skeptical of the nearby U.S. military.

When the left-leaning Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) surprised the world with its August 2009 victory over the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), many in Washington were concerned about the shift in power. Certain in his capacity to direct and coerce foreign nations, even a foreign nation that boasts the second-largest economy in the world, Barack Obama instructed his officials to meet with Japanese leaders in December. During this meeting, Japanese and American officials quarreled over a $26 billion plan to relocate U.S. troops stationed in Okinawa. The plan, established in 2006, called for the relocation of U.S. facilities to another area on the island and the withdrawal of 8,000 U.S. Marines to Guam. The Futenma dispute, as the base controversy came to be known, triggered several protests by Okinawans who wished to see the base moved out of their island entirely.

Before the December meeting, U.S. Amb. John Roos submitted that the Obama administration expected Japan to resolve the dispute "expeditiously." As far back as October, during a visit to Japan, Robert Gates tactlessly lectured his Japanese hosts, warning that if Japan vacated the deal, she would suffer palpable consequences: The U.S. would

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refuse to transfer troops from Okinawa to Guam and would refuse to surrender parcels of land belonging to Okinawans. Gates became notorious for his rudeness in dealing with the Japanese, earning himself the nickname "Grumpy Gates."

For his part, Hatoyama, the new face of the DPJ, retorted, "We are not discussing this on the premise that it has to be decided by the end of the year." Hatoyama was engaged in domestic political battles, his party having broken a five-decade-long chain of uninterrupted LDP rule. Overseeing the transition from what seemed like a one-party system, Hatoyama faced the possibility that the DPJ would lose a majority in the upper house. Small wonder that during the Washington-Hatoyama standoff, Minoru Morita, an analyst in Tokyo, declared, "Hatoyama thinks the United States should be kind enough to wait on the base issue until this political problem is solved." Joseph Nye, a former U.S. assistant secretary of defense, echoed Morita: "[W]e need a more patient and strategic approach to Japan. We are allowing a second-order issue to threaten our long-term strategy for East Asia."

IN JANUARY, shortly after Japan announced that her navy would no longer support the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan, Hillary Clinton met with Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada in Hawaii. She addressed the base with references to the "U.S.-Japanese alliance" and "stability for the region." By obscuring the message of control and recasting the issue in terms of Asian security and U.S. goodwill, Clinton secured for the Obama administration a legitimate narrative of power.

Two U.S. senators, Daniel Inouye (D-HI) and Thad Cochran (R-MS), met with Hatoyama as though to bolster Clinton's mission. Following these meetings, the United States and Japan pledged to expand ties despite the base feud. But Secretary Clinton's claims that the United States would continue to "exercise influence" in Asia for another century ruffled the feathers of more than a few commentators in the region. (A professor at Australian National University, dubbing the Obama administration "paternalistic," "colonial," "anti-democratic," and "intolerant," summed up the dispute in one mocking phrase: "Yes we can—but you can't.") Clinton eventually accepted Japan's delay, but not without mentioning that the United States "can provide resources and facilitate cooperation in ways that other regional actors cannot replicate."

Hatoyama postponed the "final" Futenma decision until May. His government then announced, in March, that the United States had signed a secret deal with the Japanese during the nascent Cold War era. The deal allowed nuclear-armed U.S. vessels to dock on Japanese soil despite the provisions of Article 9 of the Japanese constitution, which has been interpreted as forbidding the presence and possession of nuclear weapons within Japanese borders. The United States spearheaded Article 9 after World War II, and then violated the very clause it put into place.

The U.S. military does not belong in Japan. It is not welcome there, although some naively claim otherwise. The residents of Okinawa and Tokunoshima have made that clear, just as Obama has made it clear that he is as military-happy as his predecessor.

In late March, U.S. military commander Robert Willard proclaimed that the United States was "optimistic" about a resolution of the Futenma dispute. Bowing to U.S. pressure, Japan's government hinted that it supported keeping the base on Okinawa. Meanwhile, Ambassador Roos, who met with Okada on March 27, affirmed that Washington would entertain Japan's proposals about relocation. Actions speak louder than words, however, and U.S. officials had yet to make any concessions. In fact, on the same day that Roos expressed willingness to listen to Japan's position, Hatoyama insisted that he would do everything he could to relocate the base outside Okinawa. He even suggested that he would stake his life on the base-relocation issue. Here was the prime minister of Japan admitting his limited ability to influence decisions over military bases located in his own country. How open to compromise could the Obama administration be?

In April, Japan informed the United States that the base could no longer remain on Okinawa and began to offer alternatives—such as relocating Futenma to an offshore area of White Beach in Uruma—that wouldn't offend Obama's minions. Japan conveyed mixed messages, however, offering first to transfer the base to Tokunoshima in Kagoshima Prefecture and then to construct a heliport in Nago that

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would, in time, allow the base to be reconstructed off the Katsuren Peninsula, also part of Okinawa. Japan's sketchy plans had yet to please Okinawans, the Japanese public, or the Obama administration. Japanese support for Hatoyama sank below 30 percent, with the Futenma base a key factor. (Others included Hatoyama's economic policies and political-donation scandals.)

Taking advantage of Hatoyama's unpopularity, Obama questioned whether he could "trust" the Japanese prime minister to "follow through" on Futenma, a comment that sounded like a challenge and which one journalist called "extraordinarily harsh." Japanese officials were so offended by Obama's tone that they refused to record the exchange between the two leaders, even though it is customary for Japanese officials to document all discussions between Japanese prime ministers and foreign dignitaries.

In response to Obama's remarks, Hatoyama stepped up efforts to relocate the base to Tokunoshima. On April 20, Hatoyama's administration tried but failed to set up meetings with the three mayors on Tokunoshima. Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa noted on the same day that the Japanese government "must take it extremely seriously that half of [Tokunoshima's] residents demonstrated their opposition to the plan," and that under current conditions, "it would be pretty difficult for us to ask Tokunoshima to host the base." Despite the resistance of Tokunoshimans, Hatoyama reiterated his pledge to resolve the base dispute by the end of May. The United States, however, rejected all proposals to relocate to Tokunoshima. In the words of Kurt Campbell, assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, the Tokunoshima plan and others were "more concepts and ideas" than formal policies.

A Tokunoshima-based group that is opposed to the transfer of U.S. facilities to their island collected 24,000 signatures on a petition. The three mayors complained to the media that U.S. facilities would cause noise, pollution, and crime. The mayors drafted a protest letter to Obama and scheduled a rally. One mayor, Akira Okubo, said that he would send photos of the rally to Obama. Another mayor, Susumu Inamine, staged a sit-in at the Diet in Tokyo.

Meanwhile, demonstrations in Okinawa in late April drew nearly 100,000 people. Many in the crowd wore yellow as a symbol of protest. Forced to comment on these activities, Hatoyama downplayed them as just "one expression of public opinion." When he visited Okinawa days later, he informed local residents that "realistically speaking, [relocation of the base] is impossible." He was heckled. Residents of nearby Tokunoshima likewise roared over Hatoyama's potential visit to their island. One Tokunoshima resident said that if Hatoyama tried to visit, "our old people and mothers with children will sit in the street to block his way. We'll even use our fighting bulls to stop him."

These comments came as Hatoyama declared that his pledge to move Futenma outside Okinawa was a hurdle over which his administration hoped to leap. In other words, the relocation plan was a goal, not a promise.

On May 17, protestors on Okinawa formed a 17,000-man chain around the U.S. base. The chain was eight miles long. Unbeknownst to the protestors, this would be their last symbolic statement before Hatoyama's final decision, which came on May 23. Standing before an angry Okinawan crowd, Hatoyama announced that the base would be moved to a different location but would remain on the island.

Thus ended Hatoyama's stand against Obama and the United States. Days later, Hatoyama resigned, eight months after taking office. Neither Hatoyama nor Japan is the true victim of this story. The victims are the Japanese taxpayers and, most significantly, the impoverished, disenfranchised people of Okinawa, who will continue to live among, and pay for, an unwelcome foreign military.

It is odd that the most recent winner of the Nobel Peace Prize led the charge to continue occupying the small island of Okinawa. Why did Obama not agree to transfer the troops and base to the Northern Mariana Islands, a U.S. territory that lobbied to host them? How can President Obama effectively oust the peaceful leader of a foreign nation without the media thought police objecting to such blatant imperialism? George W. Bush ousted the violent leader of a foreign nation and will never live down his actions. Why should Obama be any different? True, Iraq and Okinawa are different places with different histories and different political circumstances. But at least Bush didn't pretend to be a saint. At least he faced public scrutiny. And at least he is out of office, living in relative obscurity, where he cannot harm our country any more than he already has.

The U.S. military does not belong in Japan. It is not welcome there, although some naively claim otherwise. The residents of Okinawa and Tokunoshima have made that clear, just as Obama has made it clear that he is as military-happy as his predecessor.

Allen Mendenhall is an LL.M. candidate in transnational law at Temple University. He has studied, among other places, at Temple University Japan and taught English in Ogaki, Japan.

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Adios, Rio Nido

I MOVED TO RIO NIDO, a tiny hamlet in the middle of a redwood forest, in the winter of 2008, just a day after the Big Crash. I had found my sanctuary in a world of trouble. What I didn't count on was a new form of trouble.

Rio Nido is a resort community, founded in the late 1800's by the Eagle Lodge of San Francisco, a fraternal organization of firefighters and cops. They bought the land from the Russian River Land Company and split it into lots, which were then bought up by the members. My parcel was bought by two brothers who got the lot for one gold dollar. Back then, Rio Nido was a summer gathering place for working-class families who couldn't afford the sumptuous digs at the infamous Bohemian Grove, in nearby Monte Rio, but were content to while away lazy summer days on the Rio Nido beach and then retire to the modest little cabins that ringed the canyons. During Prohibition, Rio Nido had a reputation as a place where grog was plentiful: Many of the older houses have trapdoors—for a fast getaway when the revenooers come knocking!

The Big Band era saw the Rio Nido Lodge become a popular hot spot for soldiers on leave and their sweethearts. The chairman of the local Democratic Party piped music onto the beach, and throngs danced to Ozzie Nelson, Griff Williams, Muzzy Marcellino, and Ken Baker, not to mention the Ran Wilde Orchestra. Couples met here, married, then bought small vacation homes and returned each season, banking memories of golden summers that lingered like the glittering remnants of a lost dream.

The dream was truly lost by the 1960's: The railroad, which had brought the "summer people" up from the dusty streets of San Francisco, had long since stopped running, the tracks abandoned and pulled up to give way to an ill-paved road. The second-growth redwoods had shot up to their full height, casting the cottages of Rio Nido into the deepest darkest shadows, and in the canyons it was cool even on the hottest of days. Other dark things were stirring: druggies, bikers, hippies, and poor white trash who introduced the troubles of the modern world to an earlier generation of plain working-class folks.

The lodge, which had been the center of so much of the social life of Rio Nido, passed from one careless owner to another, none of whom could make it profitable. Finally, it was snatched up by a psychologist who worked at San Quentin, who used it as an informal "outpatient" clinic for jailbirds just released. Himself a nutcase, he soon ran the place completely into the ground and—like millions of other fools caught up in the frenzy of the real-estate bubble—found himself in foreclosure. In the meantime, however, his flock of felons had descended on the lodge like the ravens who gather in the evening and mock us from the treetops. Drug dealers, prostitutes, and general all-around filth became the order of the day.

To look at Rio Nido, one would think it a sylvan paradise, with trees like the giant pillars of some Brobdingnagian cathedral, shooting straight up into the pellucid summer sky. The air itself is infused with the incense of the forest: redwood, fir, bay, ailanthus, sassafras. I never noticed the unkempt yards, littered with broken-down cars, or the shifty-eyed folk who never went to work on Mondays (or any other day): I was looking up, in awe of the magnificence that loomed over me. I loved my house, with its many skylights, double deck, and a yard carved out of a steep hill. I terraced the hill, painted and repaired the house, planted a garden and my flag. All was well—but not for long.

I didn't like the lodge or the crowd that lingered on over the summer in spite of the foreclosure. I didn't like the unkempt houses, some of which were practically falling down (albeit still inhabited). I didn't like the property down the street that looked like a junkyard. Then came the final straw: The lodge was purchased by a developer who had Ideas—and government connections.

You may have heard that California has gone bankrupt, that the Governator has to pay his employees in IOUs. It's not true, of course. There are billions in the "redevelopment" piggy bank, a slush fund that exists primarily to aid developers who give big contributions to friendly politicians. This particular developer has lots of friends at court, and he had bought up a lot of derelict properties along the river, to have them fixed up at taxpayers' expense. The lodge would be "affordable housing" for poor white trash, and a "healing center" for visiting boomers-on-the-mend. The county planners had long ago decided that this part of the Russian River would be used as a dumping ground for their self-inflicted social problems, and this developer was determined to profit from it.

I was lucky: It didn't take me too long to sell, and for a good price. A little place on the other side of the river beckoned. *Adios*, Rio Nido—it was fun while it lasted. ◆

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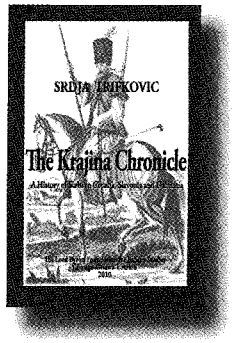

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by James Bissett

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Chicago: The Lord Byron Foundation
250 pp., $20.00

Srdja Trifkovic is no stranger to *Chronicles* readers, many of whom have found his articles commenting on foreign affairs, with particular attention to the Balkans, to be insightful, penetrating, and written with authority. His latest book, *The Krajina Chronicle*, provides further confirmation of his extraordinary talent.

The book is a history of the Serbian warrior-farmers who formed the first line of defense against Islamic invasions into the Habsburg Empire. It is a story of heroism and tragedy that reaches far beyond the old military frontier of the western Balkans. It is also a story that touches on some of the most eventful periods of European history. It ends tragically with the mass expulsion of the Krajina Serbs from their ancestral lands by Croatian military forces in August 1995, during Operation Storm. These forces, trained and equipped by the United States, drove out almost all of the Serbs from Croatia in a matter of days. The operation was made easier because the Krajina Serbs were ordered not to resist by their supposed ally, Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic.

The Krajina Chronicle begins by tracing the early Slav settlements in the western Balkans in the sixth century and describes how, over time, the antipathies that developed between Croats and Serbs were intensified by religious and cultural differences, the Croats becoming Roman Catholic and the Serbs adopting the Orthodox Faith of the Byzantine Empire. By the Middle Ages, Trifkovic documents, Serbian settlements were well established in a number of regions in territory that was later to become Croatia—a fact that is denied by some Croat revisionists. These settlements were strengthened over the years by influxes of Serbian refugees fleeing the march of the Ottoman Turks. These hardy settlers eventually were transformed by their Austrian hosts into the warrior-farmers of the Krajina. And warriors indeed they were! Quite apart from resisting Islam's encroachment into Central Europe, these Serbs fought in almost all of the wars entered into by the Habsburg monarchy from the 17th to the 20th century.

Used primarily as light cavalry and infantry, they played an important role in all of the many battles in which they were engaged. In the Seven Years' War, for example, the Serbs contributed 88,000 troops to the Habsburg armies, and during the Napoleonic Wars they sent 11 regiments against Napoleon's forces. (In World War I, when Austria invaded Serbia in 1914, the Krajina Serbs fought against their fellow Serbs.) In return for military service, the Serbs were given land and special privileges exempting them from local taxes and laws. They owed their loyalty to Vienna, not to the Croatian or Hungarian nobility. The special status afforded the Serbs was deeply resented by their Croatian neighbors.

As Croatian nationalism became increasingly prominent in the 19th century, the existence of a Serbian population with special privileges, a different religion, and different loyalties complicated and impeded the ability of Croatian leaders to deal with their Hungarian and Austrian rulers. As Trifkovic explains, this led to extreme antagonism, bordering on a "morbid obsession," toward the minority Serbian population. This hatred of the Serbs was exemplified by speeches and writings of the Croatian political activist Ante Starcevic (1823-96), who was ahead of his time in advocating genocide against the Serbs. Starcevic wrote that the Serbs are "the race of slaves, beasts worse than any other," fit for extermination. Trifkovic points out that there is hardly a town in today's Croatia that does not have a street, square, or institution named for Starcevic, who is often referred to as the Father of the Nation.

Notwithstanding Croatia's almost pathological hatred of the Serbs, it was Serbia that saved Croatia from being carved up at the end of World War I. Having been on the losing side of that conflict, Croatia, under the terms of the Treaty of London, risked losing much of her territory to Italy and Serbia. She would have been reduced to four counties around Zagreb and lost much of her coastline. Serbia rejected the Treaty of London, however, opting instead to incorporate Croatia into the new Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, thus uniting all of the South Slavs in one state that

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was to become Yugoslavia. While uniting all of the South Slavs may have been seen as a logical step in the spirit of Slavic self-determination, the new state soon ran into the same old difficulties. No sooner had it been proclaimed than Croatian politicians began agitating to break it apart.

In fact, Trifkovic argues, the bitter legacy of Serb-Croat relations seems to have been accentuated by the union:

> From the moment of its creation at the end of the Great War until its disintegration just over seven decades later, Yugoslavia was constantly beset by national problems. . . . [P]roblems which proved impossible to solve, in the first royalist Yugoslavia [1918-41] were no less difficult in the second, communist one [1945-91].

The Krajina Chronicle provides a stirring narrative of the events that followed the formation of the first Yugoslavia until its abrupt and violent breakup after the Nazi invasion in April 1941. Hitler quickly gave control of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina to Ante Pavelic, the leader of the Croatian fascist Ustasha movement. The Ustashe immediately embarked on a murderous campaign against the Serbs in Croatia. The policy was explicitly proclaimed: Kill one third, convert one third to Catholicism, and expel the remaining third from Croatia.

Trifkovic's story of this mass murder spares no ghastly detail of the insane slaughter that took place in that early spring and summer of 1941. Most of the killing was done by cutting victims' throats or by smashing their heads with a mallet or an ax. Later, when camps were set up to deal with the large numbers of the dispossessed—mainly Serbs, but also Jews and gypsies—the killing methods remained the same. How many lost their lives is not known, but estimates by holocaust historians range from 500,000 to 530,000. (Almost all of the author's sources are senior German and Italian military or diplomatic personnel. When senior SS officers complain to Berlin about the killings, the reader is left with no doubt about the horrors inflicted upon the Serbs of the Krajina.)

The book also deals with the intricacies of wartime Yugoslavia and with the factional disputes and battles between Tito's Partisans and Draza Mihailovic's royalist Chetniks. Although both were engaged in a ferocious resistance against German and Italian occupiers, their real struggle was against each other in a bloody civil war.

Here again, Trifkovic presents a perceptive analysis of the forces at play in wartime Yugoslavia and of the eventual decision by Churchill to back Tito and to stop further military support to the Mihailovic forces. The Soviet army's entry into Yugoslavia in the fall of 1944 decided the fate of the anticommunist forces, including thousands of Krajina Serbs. Although many found their way into Austria, hoping to be welcomed by the Western allies, they were betrayed by the British and Americans at the Yalta conference in February 1945, when Churchill and Roosevelt acceded to Stalin's demand that all Soviet citizens be returned to the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, anticommunist Serbs were included in this category.

In May 1945 the British army returned to Yugoslavia several thousand anticommunist Serbs who, upon arrival, were summarily shot. Fortunately, 14,000 Serbs, most of them from the Krajina, managed to find their way to Italy, where U.S. authorities refused to hand them over to Tito. Many of them ended up in the United States, Britain, Canada, and Australia.

In Tito's communist Yugoslavia, the Krajina Serbs were not granted any favors by the new regime. Their dreadful suffering at the hands of the Ustashe was not formally acknowledged, and the survivors were, in effect, denied the right to mourn and had to accept the new regime's slogan of "Brotherhood and Unity." Thousands of homeless and refugee Krajina Serbs were denied permission to return to Croatia and were resettled instead in the northern region of Vojvodina, on the Hungarian border. Throughout the Tito years the Serbian areas of Croatia remained economically underdeveloped and without a clearly defined political identity.

In the concluding chapters of the *Krajina Chronicle*, Trifkovic recounts the futile attempt by the Krajina Serbs to remain a part of what was left of the disintegrating Yugoslav Federation. When Franjo Tudjman's right-wing nationalist party came to power in 1990 with the undisguised aim of separating Croatia from Yugoslavia, the Serbs, determined to remain with Yugoslavia, formed an autonomous region and took up arms.

Croatia's declaration of independence in May 1991 led to bitter fighting between the secessionist Croats and the Serbian minority. The conflict continued until a ceasefire was arranged in January 1992, which lasted with some exceptions until the devastating assault in August 1995 of Operation Storm, described by Carl Bildt, the U.N. special envoy to the former Yugoslavia, as "the most efficient ethnic cleansing we've seen in the Balkans." Abandoned and betrayed by Milosevic and left to the mercy of a cowardly European Union and a vengeful Croatia supported by U.S. and NATO forces, the Krajina Serbs had come to the end of the line.

It is a credit to Srdja Trifkovic that his book will stand as a fitting, if perhaps the sole, testimony to a brave and extraordinary people—a compelling story, recounted in a stimulating and incisive narrative that covers a broad canvas without losing the attention to detail that brings life to historic events. The book also reveals the disturbing truth that the weak, however righteous their cause, remain at the mercy of the powerful.

James Bissett served as Canadian ambassador to the former Yugoslavia.

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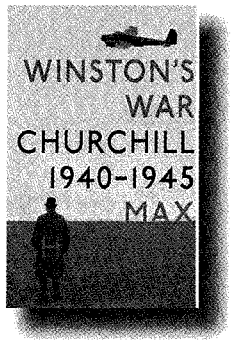

Sustained Magnificence

by Derek Turner

Winston's War: Churchill 1940-1945
by Max Hastings
New York: Alfred A. Knopf
576 pp., $35.00

Sixty-five years after the last guns ceased firing on the last Pacific atoll, Britons of all political persuasions are still wallowing in tepid World War II nostalgia.

For Atlanticists, neoconservatives, and classical liberals, the war was a great Anglosphere achievement, a landmark *en route* to social mobility plus mercantilism. For nationalists and romantics, there is a lump-in-the-throat quality about the hyperclear image of the sceptered isle, standing alone against an armored upstart, asserting individuality against conformity, "the Few" against the militant many. For nostalgists, the war represents the last gasp of the British Empire, compelled to destroy itself in order to save itself. For modern leftists, in all other circumstances bitterly hostile to national pride, the war was an inevitable confrontation with racism and antisemitism (*la lotta continua*, for them).

The result of this unusual unanimity is that we are all daily bombarded with images, anecdotes, and evocations of the period. So my immediate reaction, as I lifted yet another book about 1939-45—even one written by Max Hastings—was to sigh.

Hastings, foreseeing this likely reaction, disarmingly cites Boswell:

> [Johnson] had once conceived the thought of writing The Life of Oliver Cromwell . . . He at length laid aside his scheme, on discovering that all that can be told of him is already in print, and that it is impracticable to procure any authentick information in addition to what the world is already possessed of.

As Cromwell, now Churchill; Hastings acknowledges, "We have been told more about Winston Churchill than any other human being."

He nevertheless feels constrained to augment this biographic Gondwanaland, because "much remains opaque." He is besides fascinated by the "sustained magnificence" of "the largest human being ever to occupy his office." Hastings has a happy knack for marrying strategic and tactical insights with apposite anecdotes—such as the touching fact that among British officers' luggage landed at Norway in 1940 were fishing rods and sporting guns, or that the ever practical *New Statesman*, at the height of the British Expeditionary Force's May 1940 debacle, was insisting that "the government should at once grapple with the minor, but important problem of Anglo-Mexican relations."

Churchill was an aristocrat and an imperialist, an anachronism even in the 1930's and one, furthermore, with a deserved reputation for being impulsive, excitable, sentimental, vain, bombastic, and unreliable. As first lord of the admiralty, in 1915 he had made the disastrous decision to seize Gallipoli. He was an intemperate anti-Bolshevik long after the Whites had been vanquished. He was an opponent of self-government for Indians (the "stinking babus," he called them) and a fanatical supporter of Edward VIII. He crossed the floor of the House of Commons not once but twice, and appeared to have an obsession with Germany. He was, besides, half-American, and drank and smoked too much. He cried in public, and had disreputable friends like Brendan Bracken and Lord Beaverbrook. Had the war not come, he would now be scarcely remembered. But of course it did, as he had predicted, and suddenly his color and charisma—as well as the fact that he had been right all along—marked him out as the "obvious" war supremo.

Churchill's chief leadership qualification was that he was supremely focused. Hastings observes, "He governed on the basis that all other interests and considerations must be subordinated to the overarching objective of defeating the Axis." In this, he differed utterly from Hitler, who spent more time dreaming about a "Greater Germany" than thinking about how to win.

Churchill fizzed with energy, symbolized by his famous "Action This Day" rubber stamp, and once told his private secretary that at night "I try myself by court martial to see if I have done anything effective during the day."

Isaiah Berlin noted perceptively that "Churchill sees history—and life—as a great Renaissance pageant." This boyish

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trait led to the extraordinary speeches, among the finest ever delivered in the English language; his crowd-pleasing stunts—the V-sign, the cigars, the tommy guns; and his infatuation with special forces and "setting Europe ablaze." Hastings is dismissive of the achievements of Churchill's cherished commandos, but such escapades aided morale when the "Second Front" was still unfeasible.

Churchill predicted, incorrectly, that the Nazis would not invade Norway and that U-boats would pose no major threat to the Atlantic supply routes; demanded the Allies invade the Balkans; and sought to siphon off D-Day forces for ill-advised Italian incursions. But such errors were amply outweighed by his central strategic insight that the war could not be won without the United States, and by his achievement in dragging in that reluctant country against majority public and political opinion. It was in Greece alone that Churchill's interventions eventually proved successful, but that was only after the killing of almost 200 British troops by the communist partisans they had just liberated. Later, Churchill was outraged not to have been consulted about Germany's unconditional surrender, which he knew would prolong the war and cause unnecessary suffering (including to Germans).

Winston's War provides a salutary reminder of just how unspecial the special relationship can be. Wall Street made a killing off of Lend-Lease and the short-selling of British companies, encouraged by an administration so distrustful that it insisted on all British assets being audited. Churchill grumbled, "As far as I can make out we are not only to be skinned, but flayed to the bone." In 1942, Felix Frankfurter wrote to Stafford Cripps, deploring "a lack of continuing consciousness of comradeship between the two peoples." And as late as 1944, the American journalist John Gunther repined that "Lots of Americans and British have an atavistic dislike of one another."

Many Britons regarded America superciliously; wartime ambassador Lord Halifax, according to Hastings, found it "too much" to have to sit through a Chicago White Sox game or eat a hot dog.

For his part, Roosevelt actively sought to subvert the empire. This intrigue included attempts to hold secret meetings with the Soviets, through intermediaries like pre-war ambassador to Moscow Joseph E. Davies, a man who saw nothing wrong in amassing an art collection looted from murdered dissidents and explained to his wife that the incessant noise she heard from their Moscow hotel was the sound of jackhammers, when he knew it was firing squads.

FDR routinely undermined Churchill's attempts to provide postwar guarantees to Eastern European countries, once referring in front of a smirking Stalin to Poland (for whose independence Britain's war was ostensibly being fought) as "a source of trouble for 500 years."

In one notorious episode at Tehran in 1943, Stalin talked about shooting 50,000 German officers out of hand after the war. Roosevelt rejoined jovially that 49,000 would suffice, after which his son Elliott said he agreed with Stalin's proposal and was certain the United States would endorse it. Churchill walked out in disgust. If Roosevelt hoped he was forging a progressive partnership with Stalin, he was mistaken. In an anecdote that sheds light equally on Roosevelt and the Soviets, Molotov recalled what a colleague had said of Roosevelt: "What a crook that man must be, to have wormed his way to three terms as president while being paralyzed!" While Washington and London desisted from espionage activities in the Soviet Union during the war (Stalin was amazed they could be so naive), the Soviets spied enthusiastically on both allies. Stalin would sometimes brag to advisors "We f--ked this England!"—but this "joke" was also on America. In 1945, exasperated by the failure of his hopes for Eastern Europe, Churchill had plans drawn up for "Operation Unthinkable"—what now seems like a fantastical scheme for American and British forces, plus reactivated Wehrmacht formations, to attack the Soviet Union and cast down the "iron curtain," a phrase he was using as early as May 1945.

Winston's War reminds the mistier-eyed reader how insecure Churchill's political position could be, how tenuous his grip on occasion—not just on Parliament but even on the public affections. The Britain over which he presided was a place of profound class tensions that, *pace* the propaganda, were not magically resolved by a spasm of self-sacrifice. For example, in 1940, the year of Dunkirk and the Battle of Britain, 163,000 working days were lost through strikes, a figure that worsened as the war wore on. Churchill had critics on the right and the left—the latter encouraged by Stalin—and endured continual carping from the press, which paradoxically became noisier as military fortunes improved. In such circumstances, a lesser man would have abused the dictatorial powers available to him, but, as Churchill once remarked to Sikorski, he regarded himself as "a privileged domestic, a *valet de chambre*, the servant of the House of Commons."

Hastings notes that "Many misunderstandings of Churchill's conduct of government . . . derived from the promiscuity of his conversation. Every day . . . he gave vent to impulsive and intemperate judgements." The widespread notion that Churchill was a Germanophobe is undercut by his revulsion at the Tehran proposal, his disapprobation of unconditional surrender and the Morgenthau Plan, and gentlemanly statements such as "Germany should remain in the European family. Germany existed before the Gestapo!" The firebombing of Dresden (and other cities) is more difficult to excuse, and Hastings acknowledges that it was Churchill's fault that bombings of ci-

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vilians continued into 1945. But he insists it was by oversight that Churchill had not countermanded orders he had made in the heat of 1940 and 1941, in the context of the Blitz, "Coventration," and the "Baedeker raids" by the Luftwaffe on nonstrategic sites like Exeter and Canterbury.

HASTINGS ALSO DEFENDS Churchill against accusations that he was indifferent to the plight of the Jews, pointing out that London was unaware of the death camps until late in the war, and that even when stories started to emerge, they had to be viewed as part of the wider horror—while, in any case, even the RAF could have accomplished nothing toward saving the inmates.

Hastings has harsh words for writers such as Patrick J. Buchanan, who think that Britain could have avoided entanglement in the war by allowing Germany and Russia to destroy each other. Such critics, he argues, "ignore the practical difficulty of reaching a sustainable deal with the Nazi regime, and also adopt a supremely cynical insouciance towards its turpitude." A lasting deal would not have been possible with a man who clearly could not be trusted, whatever friendly Berchtesgaden table talk may sometimes have occurred about the British and their empire. Had Hitler beaten the Soviets, he would have had vast new energy resources available to him and would have formed an alliance with Japan. Nothing could then have stopped the Axis from dominating Eurasia, and a deadly struggle with both Britain and the United States would inevitably have ensued. Perhaps Britain should not have guaranteed Poland's frontiers; having done so, however, she had no choice but to fight, regardless of the consequences. This reviewer, at least, has no doubt that the blame for the war—and all that happened in Europe after 1945—lies with Hitler.

What did happen that was bad in Britain after her Pyrrhic victory was undoubtedly avoidable, and some of it occurred on Churchill's watch, but by then he was too old and too tired to comprehend the full extent of Attlee's fecklessness. As peacetime prime minister, Churchill was like the Fighting Temeraire—an impressive but antiquated hulk, powerless to prevent his rudderless country from being towed to the breaker's yard of history. Younger Conservatives ought to have stepped up to the mark, but they were smaller men, myopic and humdrum heirs to a bankrupt heritage, prisoners of choices made years before and increasingly representative of an angst-filled, leveling culture that made conservative values seem indefensible. Life, for the Macmillans, Lennox-Boyds, Maxwell-Fyfes, and Heaths, was less Renaissance pageant than refinancing packages; to these men, Churchill was Colonel Blimp, worthy of admiration but not of emulation.

Winston's War covers overtrodden ground. Nonetheless, Max Hastings succeeds in reminding us, as the war generation's flags are finally being furled and put away, how things were, how they seemed then to a uniquely engrossing and perfectly placed patriot, and how much we all still subsist in his debt and shadow.

Derek Turner is editor of The Quarterly Review.

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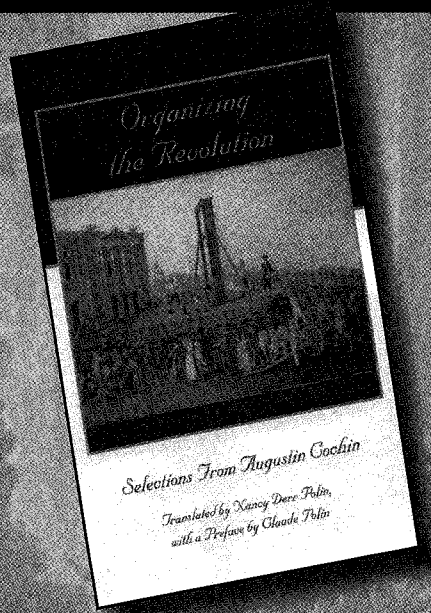
Organizing the Revolution
Selections From Augustin Cochin
Translated by Nancy Derr Polin, with a Preface by Claude Polin

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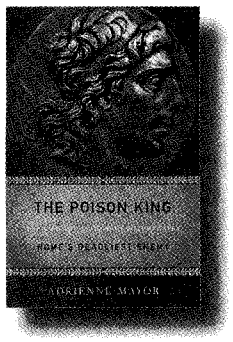

A Legend for Our Time

by Matthew A. Roberts

The Poison King: The Life and Legend of Mithradates, Rome's Deadliest Enemy
by Adrienne Mayor
Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press
472 pp., $29.95

In the spring of 88 B.C., dozens of cities across Asia Minor united in a secret plot to kill all the Romans and Italic peoples—man, woman, and child—in their territories. How the plot was kept secret remains unknown, but the massacre was carried out successfully. Ancient sources indicate that almost all Roman and Italic residents of Asia Minor and surrounding islands—at least 80,000—were massacred on a single appointed day. People were killed in their homes, dragged from temples and butchered, and their property was confiscated. This is perhaps the most stunning, and mysterious, mass revolt in Roman history.

The mastermind behind this plot was Mithradates, whose Persian name means "sent by Mithra," the Iranian sun god. Mithradates, king of Pontus, opposed Roman control of his territories—first through subversive diplomacy and later through guerilla warfare. For decades Mithradates eluded Roman armies, but he finally succumbed after the betrayal of his own people.

Mithradates has long been a subject of fascination for Westerners. In more civilized times, when a man admired his enemy's accomplishments in addition to criticizing his faults, Europeans did not fall short in their acknowledgment of this "king of kings." Machiavelli considered him a valiant hero; A.E. Housman, Mozart, and Racine helped to immortalize him. Perhaps the most knowledgeable toxicologist in the ancient world, Mithradates captivated the imaginations of European nobles for centuries in their search for the Mithridatum, the antidote of antidotes. Likewise, if earlier praise for Mithradates was not lacking, neither was criticism of Roman excess and the shortsightedness of Roman imperialism.

Unlike earlier portrayals of Mithradates and the Romans, which are marked by moderation and grounded in a Western perspective, *Poison King*, a National Book Award finalist by popular historical writer Adrienne Mayor, falls into the category not of historical biography but of postcolonial studies. Unhappy with earlier, more balanced biographies, Mayor presents Mithradates as a biracial (part-Greek, part-Persian) savior of the East. Her book is largely a vilification of everything Roman—the Romans are exhaustively described as greedy, villainous, and barbaric—and a fatuous championing of Mithradates' revolt against Rome, which, oddly, she attributes not to self-interest but to the pursuit of "Greco-Persian-Anatolian ideals" and "freedom." (Heaven forbid that Mithradates could have been a Persian realist taking calculated risks!)

Mayor often becomes untethered in her flights of historical speculation. For instance, although little is known about Mithradates' personal life, Mayor employs modern psychiatric diagnostic tools to demonstrate that he "cannot be labeled a psychopath." Likewise, she suggests that the conventional account of the death of Mithradates—betrayed by his own and about to be captured by Pompey, he committed suicide—may not be accurate. She conjectures that he may have faked his own death and retired to the steppes with his lover, the Amazon Hypsicratea, who later may have disguised herself as a man and become Hypsicrates, Julius Caesar's companion.

Mayor's wanton speculation, and her ideological portrayal of an ancient conflict, may be attributed in part to the fact that she lacks serious graduate training in either classics or history. Yet in earlier times, amateurs accomplished important work in their fields. Many of the original contributors to the Loeb Classical Library were gentlemen scholars of Greek and Latin—bankers, businessmen, and lawyers who spent their spare time pondering the classics. The problem with Mayor is not that she is an amateur but that she is a reflection of our age, a writer who tells people what they want to hear: Westerners are evil, Asiatics noble, and the more fanciful the speculation in regard to her subject, the better. The tragedy is that there are few people around today to tell her she's wrong.

Matthew A. Roberts writes from Kansas City, Missouri.

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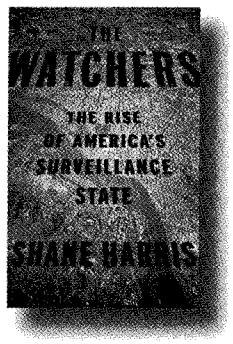

A Question of Dots

by Gerald J. Russello

The Watchers: The Rise of America's Surveillance State
by Shane Harris
New York: Penguin
432 pp., $27.95

JOHN POINDEXTER—Navy veteran and national-security advisor during President Reagan's second term—resigned in disgrace after congressional hearings revealed that the United States, with Poindexter's approval and with the help of an enterprising young lieutenant colonel named Oliver North, was selling arms to Iran and giving the profits to the Nicaraguan Contras to support their guerilla war against the Sandinistas. Poindexter disappeared from the public scene for almost a decade, yet his vision of an all-encompassing intelligence-gathering network proved irresistible.

In those Tom Clancy days of "Soviet infiltration" and the Cold War, national security seemed simple, if not simpleminded. Today, we might very well prefer to sell arms to a secular left-wing government and use the proceeds to support Muslim moderates. Who wouldn't want a few Sandinistas to kick around, rather than (another) nuclear Islamic state? As usual, U.S. policy was long on technological know-how and expense and short on historical context or long-term goals.

The Watchers is a well-written and gripping account of the emergence of the "surveillance state," seen primarily through the prism of Poindexter's career. Shane Harris, a journalist who has long covered national-security issues, describes the surveillance state as

> an amalgam of laws, technology, and culture in which the government's default position is to collect information about people on a massive scale for the broadly defined purpose of protecting national security.

With some honorable exceptions, both Republicans and Democrats have, for their own reasons, enthusiastically supported an ever-larger national-security program.

Events such as the bombing in 1983 of a Marine barracks in Beirut and the Achille Lauro hijacking galvanized Poindexter and others to develop a system that would render massive amounts of information to the state; sifting through that data, Poindexter believed, would illustrate patterns and connections that human intelligence would never catch. That information is largely contained in America's telecommunications networks. Harris's account of government efforts to control those networks is particularly disconcerting, as much of it has passed down the memory hole. The FBI and other agencies argued they had the authority to insert themselves into physical telephonic networks, to ease their ability to monitor conversations. And indeed, they have a great ability to pressure telecommunications companies to do just that.

Laws such as the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) were meant to strike a balance between privacy and security. But, as Harris notes, these lines were hard to draw, and harder to enforce. President Reagan eased some of the restrictions through executive order; President George W. Bush, after September 11, did the same. And Obama, despite his liberal posturing, was quick to adopt the surveillance state's structure. The endless "War on Terror," combined with technology that scoops up information regardless of legal niceties, gave new impetus to the Watchers. Amendments to FISA actually increased the government's powers, and the discovery in 2005 of a warrantless surveillance program within the National Security Agency has had no discernible effect.

After September 11, Poindexter returned to government service, advocating a program called Total Information Awareness, which would track people through the traces they left as they moved, communicated with one another, and lived their lives. A new kind of war, Poindexter argued, required new uses of masses of information. The D.C. establishment ate it up. Ultimately, TIA did not succeed under that name, but many of its elements have been retained in new form.

According to defenders of programs like TIA, the basic privilege of a free citizen against unwarranted government snooping should be surrendered to the end that no American life is ever lost to an attack that could have been prevented. But this vision is, ultimately, a dangerous fantasy. A program of total awareness is a pro-

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gram of tyranny, and not necessarily one of safety. Information collected needs to be used, and an expensive, secretive system designed to detect threats will detect them, hypothetical or attenuated though they may be. Communists two decades ago, terrorists today, conservative "hate groups," perhaps, tomorrow: What matters is getting, and using, the data. And government is never careful about self-policing its stated limits.

It is a great technical achievement that American intelligence can listen in on phone calls in Karachi and track cars in Kabul (or even Kalamazoo or Kansas City). The more basic question is whether our policies should require that we do so. A noninterventionist policy, combined with strict immigration laws, would obviate much of the need for programs like TIA. This does not mean that U.S. intelligence should be abandoned or dismantled; immigration policies are not going to help to monitor China's nuclear program or North Korean missile tests. However, the background context is all-important. If the "default position" is the state obtaining personal data to create a fully secure environment, something like TIA will be the result. Change the default position, however, and TIA seems less useful and more threatening. The citizenry itself should be its own first protector, not eyes in the sky (or ears in our phones). Neighbors make better guardians than TSA security checkpoints.

The recent attempted attack on New York's Times Square is a good example. It was a street vendor, not any of the multiple agencies charged with monitoring Americans' safety, who noticed something amiss, and the attack would likely have succeeded had the would-be bomber correctly assembled the device. (One might add that although the suspect taken into custody was fully enmeshed in the surveillance state—including student visas, plane trips to Pakistan, and e-mail addresses—the Watchers let him slip through the net.) The overall record of the surveillance state is not, in fact, that good, though each failure only spurs the call for more funding and more secret programs, another inescapable result of assuming the state must protect us from every imaginable (or imaginary) danger. As Harris notes, the Watchers "have become very good at collecting dots and not very good at connecting them." Because of the political correctness gripping American elites, those responsible for making connections cannot make tough decisions about who, exactly, poses the greatest danger to American society. This timidity helps the surveillance state, and supporting the surveillance state gives cover to an elite concerned more with political power than with actual security. The end result is often normal Americans, who have nothing to hide, being harassed while actual threats escape unnoticed—including the threat to liberty of having an otherwise law-abiding populace under constant surveillance.

It is perhaps no surprise that Poindexter was one of Robert McNamara's 1960's "Whiz Kids." The technocratic elitism and disregard for republican government are a part of McNamara's legacy. That the justification for spying on American citizens is to be found now in the Iraqi desert rather than in the dachas outside Moscow is not sufficient reason to discount the dangers such ideas and actions present to the future of free government.

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An Excerpt

This is a mistake, Erik Kleinsmith told himself as he stared at his computer screen. He'd been agonizing over his orders. He considered disobeying them. He could make copies of all the data, send them off in the mail before anyone knew what had happened. He could still delete all the copies on his hard drive, but the backups would be safe. No one could say they hadn't tried, that they hadn't warned people.

The earnest thirty-five-year-old army major had drawn attention to himself as the leader of an innovative, some said renegade, band of intelligence analysts. Working under the code name Able Danger, Kleinsmith's team had compiled an enormous digital dossier on a terrorist outfit called Al Qaeda. By the spring of 2000, it totaled two and a half terabytes, equal to about one tenth of all printed pages in the Library of Congress. This was priceless information, but also an alarm—the intelligence showed that Al Qaeda had established a presence inside the United States, and signs pointed to an imminent attack.

While the graybeards of intelligence at the CIA and in the Pentagon had come up empty handed, the army wanted to find Al Qaeda's leaders, to capture or kill them. Kleinsmith believed he could show them how. That's where he ran into his present troubles. Rather than rely on classified intelligence databases, which were often scant on details and hopelessly fragmentary, Kleinsmith created his Al Qaeda map with data drawn from the Internet, home to a bounty of chatter and observations about terrorists and holy war. Few outside Kleinsmith's chain of command knew what he had discovered about terrorists in America, what secrets he and his analysts had stored in their data banks. They also didn't know that the team had collected information on thousands of American citizens—including prominent government officials and politicians—during their massive data sweeps. On the Internet, intelligence about enemies mingled with the names of innocents. Good guys and bad were all in the same mix, and there was as yet no good way to sort it all out.

—*from* The Watchers: The Rise of America's Surveillance State, *by Shane Harris*

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Caring in Colorado (and Everywhere)

NOT LONG AGO I attended a dinner hosted by a Catholic laymen's organization in the social hall of a church on Colorado's Front Range. The meal was followed by after-dinner speeches and concluding remarks by an official representing the organization. "We are caring Catholics of Colorado" were almost the first words out of her mouth. I missed the rest of what she said after that, because I went to the bar for another drink and was away from the table a long time. I would bet my tickets on *Queen Mary 2* next fall that this woman had no idea that her unhappy choice of words represents the modern ideological liberalism that is the sworn enemy of the Catholic Church in Colorado, and everywhere.

The carelessness with which this word *caring* is strewn about these days is an unmistakable sign that, in the contemporary world, there is precious little of the real thing but plenty of the ideological sort. The sorry adjective has achieved sacred status and passed beyond the reach of satire and even of irony, like the nouns *diversity* and *tolerance*. Unfortunately, our middle classes have a tin ear when it comes to language, which is why this poor Catholic lady was capable of uttering that awful sentence. One might protest that the awful sentence was only that, an awful sentence, at best a lapse in rhetorical taste. Unfortunately, there is a great deal more to it than that. Her simple statement, whatever exactly it meant or was supposed to mean, has, at a deeper level, profound political and spiritual implications for society and religion alike.

IN A BOOK published a quarter-century ago, Kenneth Minogue argued that ideological terms like *compassion* and *tolerance* point to the substitution of ethics for morality: the postmodern code that demands no sacrifice, or even much in the way of effort, on the part of the ethical individual. The exchange matters, for reasons both moral and practical. The ethic of "compassion," or "caring," urged by ideologues in regard to endless evocations of suffering—remote or near, human or otherwise—provokes a vaguely pleasurable guilt in their fellow ideologues. In more or less normal people, it often elicits a callous and cynical response that all too easily becomes reflexive and eventually stifles the admirable impulse to charitable thoughts and sacrificial actions.

Possibly this response to the daily catalogue of suffering, misery, and need to which all of us in the developed world are subjected represents nothing more than the individual reaction of a crabbed, uncharitable soul (my own). Intuition tells me otherwise. Nonetheless, there must be many such souls in the world, each one of them in need of encouragement in spiritual progress, not further inducement to a deeper cynicism and a more profound ungenerosity of spirit. And here the ideological-commercial media, which presume to represent the world to us every morning and evening, are of no help at all. Just the opposite, in fact.

From the local up through the state and national levels, the news media, print and electronic, are dominated by ideological liberals with an insatiable but unhealthy appetite for what Minogue, in an earlier book, called "suffering situations." To pick on Colorado again: The Denver television stations rarely, if ever, broadcast news items reporting on what the state legislature, the governor's mansion, county commissions, and city councils have been up to that day. (It's usually plenty.) Valid news stories are not, of course, restricted to political events. Nevertheless, in order to qualify as news, a story ought to convey the fact or impression of some unique happening in the world, something of genuine significance that points beyond itself. But the Denver stations (again, by way of example) are not interested in news that really is news. Their trade is in so-called human-interest stories passed off as news: humdrum reports on events of a fundamental, eternal, and generally sordid nature, designed to provoke empathetic responses on the part of the "caring" communities they profess to "serve." Yellow journalism, of course, is as old as the trade itself. (Perhaps it is even the original journalism.) It might be defended simply as a form of entertainment, if the "entertainment" at issue were not actually a species of pornography: fatal car and plane wrecks, child abductions, spousal murders, bank robberies, school shootings, and so on. For discriminating viewers, such "news" reports convey only stupid, irritating, and meaningless incidents lacking completely in significance, the equivalent of Twitter. Here is no news, but rather a distraction from the news. Yet it is not exactly yellow journalism, either. The old yellow journalism was an honest bid for a prurient, voyeuristic response to the misfortunes that befall other human beings with whom the consumer has no personal connection. The new yellow journalism of the ideological age, by comparison,

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seeks to titillate with the underlying purpose of persuading its wide, and widely diverse, audience that it is really one family in its tragedies and in its travails, likewise of one mind and one feeling in its response to these things. It works, then, to promote the ideological solidarity that universal caring represents. (This is the attitude summed up by the contemporary cliché "It takes a village," or the saying, also popular in educational circles, "They are all 'our' children.")

At the higher levels of the print media, where the "news"—the better part of it, anyhow—really is news, the mode of presentation is essentially the same, only more sophisticated, suave, and almost infinitely more cosmopolitan. The *New York Times*, famous for its exhaustive coverage of famines, floods, native war, revolution, and genocide in remote places as well as its distressed attention to urban ghettos and the remaining vestiges of the sharecropping system at home, is perhaps the ultimate example of a caring newspaper. It is true that the facts conveyed in such articles are frequently of the sort that every informed person ought to have, and yet the reader cannot avoid the suspicion that his compassion is being subtly solicited, his capacity for caring evoked, in the interest of some broader agenda.

I have been speaking here of the news media, but only insofar as they represent a part of the wider national conversation, from political speeches in Washington to cocktail-party chatter in Beverly Hills.

Consumers resistant to the ideological virus are correspondingly susceptible to a defensive reaction to the news that is apt to be angry, cynical, and contemptuously dismissive. Who cares what happens to a kid dumb enough to follow a total stranger for an ice-cream cone? . . . They need to take the 20 mph signs down from in front of the elementary schools and let all the stupid ones get killed off. . . . If you enter this country illegally, who cares that you get fired from your job and thrown in prison for carrying a stolen Social Security card? Your wife can make all the money she needs to support your miserable *mocosos* selling herself on the street in Juárez. . . . Cripples unable to climb three steps without a wheelchair ramp should stay at home in front of the TV. . . . Those people stampeded to death in that nightclub fire were just a bunch of hippie rock fans anyway. . . . In this age of compassion, when even heartless Catholics who deny a woman's right to an abortion and a homosexual's to marriage regard "caring" as a moral imperative, such responses to suffering situations are essentially sane and self-preserving ones. The Haitians are hopeless—what's the use? Let them pray to their voodoo gods to rebuild their godforsaken country for them. . . . Another explosion in the Green Zone? The car bomb is another word for the Iraqi ballot.

Deliberate callousness is a natural, if unpleasant, human response to the dishonest moral solicitation that "caring" represents. "Caring" cheapens a genuine human compassion within society in the interest of creating an ideological sodality comprising citizens, legalistically conceived, who do not understand what a society really is. Human care is not a smug, self-conscious commitment to a generalized benevolence diffused through some vague humanitarian concept like equality, democracy, or diversity. A true society is a society made of related communities, each bound within itself and linked to those above, below, and around it through ties of loyalty, affection, and responsibility. These ties are personal and therefore wholly natural, and they become more attenuated in direct proportion to the distance to which they are stretched. Real care is the sentiment of obligated attachment that is at once created by, and responsive to, these ties, and it is strong insofar as those ties themselves are strong. Ideological society is a contradiction in terms because ideology aims at the abolition of societies, and in fact of the possibility of society itself. Should it ever succeed in accomplishing its goal, the result would be the destruction of anyone's ability to care for anything beyond himself, and with it every other pure and noble human feeling that life in society engenders and nurtures.

The practical danger is that "caring" may discredit, and finally replace, the entirely real but old-fashioned idea of charity. The modern welfare state's vast Departments and Ministries of Caring emphasize and exemplify the danger. Nowadays, "caring" satisfies, in a wholly dishonest way, the conscientious human need to acknowledge responsibility for the well-being of others, while bureaucracy assumes the material burden that responsibility entails. The fact that the cost is borne by the taxpayers encourages mere "caring" to answer to that need, in the belief that cheap sentiment plus providential government accomplish all that is necessary by way of fulfilling the charitable injunction. Indeed, it is entirely reasonable for a citizen to ask himself why, as a taxpayer, he has not already fulfilled his responsibility to the poor, and why the poor continue to require anything from him. In my parish, a second collection is taken up each month on behalf of the local poor. Although my wife and I contribute to this collection, I have often wondered how it is that a family in Laramie cannot make ends meet simply by registering with the state and federal welfare agencies and collecting what by law is due it every month—how, in fact, "the poor" can exist at all, except in a relative sense, in this great social democracy of ours. Apparently they do, which suggests that "caring" has yet to succeed in its ambition to make Christ a liar by confounding His statement that "the poor always ye have with you." ◆

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Give Me Back My Frock!

Pastors are sinners in need of redemption, like everyone else. A pastor must forgive and be forgiven, and this is something that the flock must be taught and must embrace, or subtle Donatism will creep in with the latest gossip.

Nonetheless, beginning with the Pastoral Epistles of Saint Paul, Christians have also been taught that, for the pastor, a higher standard applies. In each Christian tradition, there are penalties for certain clerical sins—sins that diminish the teaching authority of the office. Do this, and you may no longer wear that frock.

Which seems to modern ears a bit unfair. Here in the Age of Yes, it sounds a little . . . unforgiving. Is there any sin that God cannot forgive? And if we refuse to forgive a pastor who has fallen, then don't we prove the old saying, "Christians are the only soldiers who shoot their own wounded"?

By his own account, fallen evangelical megachurch pastor Ted Haggard has had his brains blown out by the Church. "I thought we were a family," he glumly told ABC News's Dan Harris.

Near the end of 2006, a muscle-bound, drug-dealing, call-boy masseur, Mike Jones, accused the now-former president of the National Association of Evangelicals of having lots of sex with him and buying dope. Haggard denied it, then admitted to one dilly-dally, then took four polygraph tests to prove his semi-innocence. New Life Church of Colorado Springs ousted him, and he submitted to the supervisory discipline of a council of four evangelical leaders, including Dr. James Dobson. Among other things, this council required that Haggard leave the state of Colorado, refrain from any sort of ministry, and cut off all contact with members of his former congregation. He was also required to comply with his church's efforts to have his ordination revoked. And he was instructed to provide evidence that he was pursuing another career.

The media had a field day with the story, armed with video footage of the cloyingly ebullient pastor preaching, just weeks before he was dragged out of his closet, about the evils of "gay marriage." To America he was presented as both repulsive and sympathetic, as cameras followed him into his tiny hotel home in Phoenix, Arizona, quite a punishment for the former flock-star. But the real villains were the nasty evangelicals who punished him for being himself, for creating a world in which Haggard was forced to hide his light under a bushel of Bible verses.

Haggard soon joined Phoenix First Assembly, where the Holy Spirit speaks very directly and clearly into the ears of those who listen, without the encumbrances of Scripture or tradition. On December 12, 2007, just one year after the call-boy masseur hit the fan, "the Holy Spirit" said (three times, no less), "'When you were 28 years old, I called you to Colorado Springs. No one on Earth has the authority to negate that call.'"

One year later, Haggard was back in the shadow of New Life, working on an HBO special (*The Trials of Ted Haggard*), and doing Larry King, Oprah, and anyone else who would have him on. Amid the media orgy, in which Haggard relayed his therapist's proclamation that he was officially a "heterosexual with homosexual attachments," a former member of New Life, who had come to him for help with his own homosexual attachments, accused him of another sexscapade. Haggard clung to the fact that his four polygraphs proved "that there had never been sexual contact" between himself and anyone associated with New Life Church. (Getting into bed with him and masturbating in front of him and offering him hush money do not count, Mr. Ken Starr!) More allegations have been met with similarly polygraphic denials.

This past summer, Ted Haggard started a new church in Colorado Springs. His flock (large enough to have to move from his dainty barn to a rented facility after a few short weeks) is a mixture of newcomers with various attachments and poached members of New Life. He is sorry for all of the hurt he caused the "gay community" over the years by judging them, and he is sorry for being unfaithful to his wife, who remains at his side, talking about their wonderful sex life. He refuses now to say that homosexuality is a sin, only that it a sin *for him*, since he is married.

What we aren't hearing from Haggard is that he is sorry for sodomy *qua* sodomy, or for the shame he has heaped on Bible-believing Christians of all denominations for his lies and for slandering the men who tried to place him on the path of repentance—which, incidentally, has something of a linear relationship with the forgiveness a minister of the Gospel is called to dispense and receive.

By his own account, Haggard is more than ready to dispense, having performed works of supererogation. Concerning his brief time *sans* frock, he told the *Wall Street Journal*, "I over-repented." ◆

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Who'll Stop the Rain?

REBEKAH WANTS TO BE an algebra teacher. She announced this a few months ago, about the time she turned 15. "You do know," I said, "to be an algebra teacher, you can't just study algebra. You'll have to be proficient in math at all levels, through calculus, including geometry."

Only six months before, she had been complaining every night about her geometry homework. *It's too hard. It's not as much fun as algebra. I can't think spatially.*

"I know," she simply replied. A few weeks later, her report card arrived from Sacred Heart Classical Center. *Geometry: A+.*

"It got easier," she said.

When I was my daughter's age, I knew that I would go into some field of math or science, possibly to teach, most likely to engage in research. A year later, I had decided on physics as my major, which should come as no surprise to the readers of this scientific journal. *Oh, wait . . .*

IN THE SMALL Midwestern town where I grew up (and in most small towns in other regions of the United States in the 1960's, 70's, and 80's), everyone assumed that any child who showed academic promise would choose a math or science major for college. When we took an IQ test in the fourth grade and a handful of us were chosen to spend a few hours each week across the street at the high school, the advanced tutorials we were offered were all in math and science. (I spent hours programming a TRS-80 to draw lines on a TV screen, a skill that I use every day.)

But we were also given cards to the high-school library, and I took full advantage of mine, spending hours browsing the stacks and checking out works of history and literature and poetry, but very little math or science. (The single exception I remember was Douglas Hofstadter's *Gödel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Braid*, a book of essays concerning math and science, but neither a math book nor a science book *per se*.)

Looking back, my decision to abandon physics for political theory after my first ten weeks at Michigan State seems pretty obviously foreshadowed by my choice of reading material at age 11. But had I suggested at any point in my high-school years that I would choose to major in a humane discipline, the answer from all of my teachers—including those who didn't teach math or science—would have been the same: *Don't waste your talents and intelligence; choose a math or science major instead.*

Why the emphasis on math and science, especially in a school so small that it couldn't offer advanced-placement courses in those subjects? Perhaps it was a product of the times. All of our teachers, young or old, had lived through the space race and the rise of computers and the rapid intrusion of electronics into every facet of human life. Scientists who had won the Nobel Prize enjoyed a fame that even Nobel laureates in literature did not.

At the height of the Rockford desegregation lawsuit, everyone knew that one of the great tragedies of court-ordered quotas was the gutting of math and science curricula. When not enough minorities enrolled in advanced mathematics, calculus was removed from the curriculum, and high schools dropped to one session of trigonometry. (Even my small high school had offered two sessions of trig, because at least half of the students took it.)

But can anyone remember what humanities courses were cut here in Rockford? Outside of Latin, I couldn't say. There must have been some, of course, but such cuts didn't provoke the public outcry that the gutting of math and science did.

THE SCIENCE AND MATH classes in our little town were very good (of the 140 students in my graduating class, most of the top quarter easily placed out of freshman college math and science courses, even without having taken AP classes), but looking back, where my elementary and junior and senior high schools excelled was in the humanities. As grateful as I am for the solid math and science education that I received (even today, I enjoy solving equations in my head, and no waitress has to worry about being shortchanged on her tip), I'm even more thankful for the love of literature and history and philosophy and language instilled by Miss Poplaski and Miss Kramer and Mr. Lamkin and Mr. Wolbrink, among many others.

And so, while we have made sure that our children receive a solid grounding in math and science, we have never pushed them to commit to a career in those fields. If they wish to major in physics or chemistry or engineering or math, we will not stand in their way, but the core of their education will always be in the humanities. The physicist or biologist or theoretical mathematician who has no interest in literature, philosophy, or poetry condemns himself to a life as stunted as that of Dustin Hoffman's Rainman. ◆

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Hanging With the Snarks: An Academic Memoir

by Clyde Wilson

There seemed to be little interest among audience members [at a scholarly meeting] in whether the ideas I had presented were true, only in whether their application would bring about results they liked.
—Jason Jewell

I USED TO HAVE a running argument with a colleague, a great scholar now gathered to his fathers, during late-afternoon seminars catered by the good folks at Jack Daniels. The argument was as to the cause of the shallowness, fakery, pusillanimity, and lack of vocation of the professoriate that we saw around us every day. I argued that it was a failure of intelligence; he, that it was a defect of character. We were both right, though he more so than I.

It is a common misconception that college professors are particularly intelligent. Since the great proliferation of doctorates beginning in the 1960's, this is no longer true, if it ever was. Professors for the most part are just people who have stayed in school a long time. In IQ they average out below physicians and entrepreneurs and about match the lower third of lawyers, clergymen, accountants, and congressmen. Many of the absurd statements that we hear every day from professors are uttered by people with little intelligence or learning who are simply working with what they know: current intellectual fashion. It is not a testimonial to serious intelligence when people believe, as they do, that those who disagree with them do so only because they are *not as smart as them.*

Forty years ago, when I took my first post, I naively looked forward to vigorous conversation and debate with my colleagues. I am still waiting. But I soon learned to appreciate the expression *stuffed shirts.* Among these learned people, irony is completely lost, and even everyday humor fails to ignite any spark whatsoever. A faculty meeting can resemble a congress of Lewis Carroll's snarks, who are identified by their "slowness in taking a jest. / Should you happen to venture on one, / It will sigh like a thing that is deeply distressed: / And it always looks grave at a pun." Some snarks "have feathers, and bite," and some "have whiskers, and scratch."

Today's professors are too often people to whom their dubious status as intellectually superior to the common herd is far more important than their supposed function. They never debate. Ideas contrary to the fashion are merely to be met with an air of disdain or condescension appropriate to superior intellects confronted with ignorance. After all, they read the *New York Times* and listen to NPR. C.S. Lewis called them "men without chests." The enormities come so fast and so often that we have grown used to them—ridiculous oracular statements from people with such arrogant cluelessness that they presume to dismiss the great cultural and historical figures of the past as so much rubbish.

Traditionally, many American professors came from affluent families who decided that this particular son did not have what it takes for the professions or business and so directed him to a modest but secure white-collar position. But those old professors at least knew well what they knew, labored sincerely to communicate it to the rising generations, and had a real commitment to their community. The proliferation of doctorates and professorial jobs in the 1960's filled college faculties with people who in earlier generations would have been resentful retail clerks, whose only qualification for higher learning is conformity to the behavior of their masters. (I partly exempt the growing numbers of women in the profession from my complaint. They average out, as far as my observation goes, smarter, tougher, and more professional than the 60's men.)

I generalize recklessly. There are noble exceptions. It may be that the situation is not as bad in the hard sciences, although from my limited observation I think it is. The sciences in higher education have other problems. At the last commencement I attended, my university awarded about 30 doctorates in the sciences, all but one to Asians.

The worst thing that ever happened to American higher education was the infusion of federal money after *Sputnik.* The money was supposed to improve things. It vastly expanded the numbers of the college population without improving the quality whatsoever. Both students and professors now know less than they used to. Even worse, the floating cash attracted plausible opportunists, a class that has now almost entirely taken over university administration. In my long and checkered academic career I dealt with a dozen or more presidents, vice presidents, associate vice presidents, deans, *etc.* With only one exception they were, male and female alike, duplicitous con artists, and the males, besides, were weasely cowards. None had any accomplishments as a scholar or teacher. None had any concept of culture or any philosophy of education except whatever could be covered by the latest trendy theory. None had any institutional loyalty—administration was either a hiding place or a transit depot. It is like making the hospital p.r. man chief of surgery. These people control the pay and perks of genuine scholars. This bad character is mostly true of department chairmen, also, though there

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is an occasional honorable person with a sense of service found among them.

How else can you describe except as con artists people who routinely without blushing speak as though equality in eduction and excellence in education are the same thing? Administrators and their flunkies have proliferated and are a major cause of escalating costs—along with new "programs" and "institutes," almost invariably boondoggles, though usually with benevolent-sounding titles. It is these programs and institutes more than regular academic departments that are the driving force behind the politically correct intolerance that is now pervasive on campuses.

The federal touch—which is really the touch of Boston, New York, Detroit, and San Francisco—poisons everything it comes near. We now have a vastly overblown higher-education establishment that serves no purpose except the profit of those who get a cut. Thousands too many doctorates and hundreds of thousands of students who are wasting their time and money.

Students used to be grateful to get into college. Now they have multiple choices, and the schools compete for them—with the inducements of grade inflation and a sybaritic lifestyle. Importing students is a big industry, not because foreign students are seeking a quality education but because administrators are hauling in bodies anywhere they can get them. Don't even get me started on sports (each athlete now has his own graduate-student flunky to run academic interference) or the organized-crime enterprise known as "textbooks."

Russell Kirk, of course, clearly described the debacle of higher education and its causes a half-century ago. The trendy critics of recent times—Bloom, Horowitz, D'Souza—lay the blame on leftist ideology. As usual, they don't know what they are talking about. Leftist ideology is the symptom, not the cause. These phony "conservative" critics are merely Trotskyites who are shouting that the sky is falling because colored Maoists have cut into their control of academic patronage. Multiculturalism and deconstruction could not possibly have seized control of a professoriate in which integrity and real learning were the norm. No genuine scholar ever discarded traditional wisdom for a truculent and destructive fantasy. If you could see a "search committee" at work, you would understand my point. Such committees for filling faculty positions have an unerring ability to smell out and settle on mediocrity. No obvious losers, who might cause trouble, and no obvious winners, who might set an uncomfortable pace—safe mediocrity is the choice every time. (The same process works in admitting graduate students.)

To a considerable extent, of course, the colleges merely reflect the political, ideological, and moral defects of the larger American society. Although, as a nonacademic friend reminds me, that is where the snowball is rolling over the fastest.

The politicians, businessmen, and wealthy alumni who serve as trustees are, like most Americans, captives of educationalist flimflam and are reluctant to cause any trouble in a post that they often regard as a vanity trip. Generally they have no more concept of real education than the administrators. It is particularly bad in Southern universities. The controlling powers are perhaps not quite as advanced into the depths of political and moral decadence as in the rest of the country, but they are deathly afraid of being thought backward and provincial by those beyond the line whom they like to think of as their social equals. The worst example is the University of Texas, which has expended immense riches without achieving any civilizational contribution whatsoever. And Mr. Jefferson's University of Virginia, designed to train republican statesmen, is now largely a resort for rich outsiders.

My university doubled its faculty in 1966, and again in 1971. Had there been any vision at the top beyond creating an imitation, second-string Ohio State, a scholarly and cultural miracle would have been possible. South Carolina had a modest but genuine and unique culture and tradition as a base. But the great resources were spent on hiring professors who were akin to but not quite as good as the general run of academics elsewhere. I know of a department of 40 members in which there are two native Carolinians and six Southerners all told, white and black. It is no accident that five of the six are the greatest producers and claimants of distinction in the department. Any mediocre outsider can be appointed at a Southern school, but a Southerner has no hope unless he is very, very good. Europeans usually find it is child's play to impress the mediocre American professors. The immigrant scholars are generally cynical opportunists, but they come from cultures that

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are still literate, and, unlike the Americans, they have survived a sharp competition for a limited number of places.

We have such phenomena as departments where the native office staff have more intelligence, integrity, and "class" than the professors they must work for. And we have cases of professors resident for 30 years who have never had a real conversation with a native and who flee north at every academic break. Real scene: two professors, one a product of European fascist education and the other a homosexual from the Midwest, clucking together over the supposed stupidity of the people of South Carolina—those who employ them and whose children they are charged with teaching. Their version of "being your own man." What are we to think of a Southern college literature department that—except for Faulkner, who can't be ignored—knows and teaches nothing of Southern literature, the marvel of the world? In my early education at the University of North Carolina, I felt the remnants of a real tradition of a state institution's mission of service to the people of the state. That is gone forever, everywhere.

My institution had a president for 13 years who had left Illinois just ahead of the sheriff, and whose legal and moral transgressions would take a book to describe and eventually landed him in the federal pen. He maintained power by throwing business to politically connected law firms and flattering influential people with opportunities to hobnob with second-string celebrities such as Madame Sadat and Robby Benson. His downfall only came when an out-of-state newspaper dug up incriminating documents from a landfill. So burdened with naiveté and inferiority complexes are Southern trustees that several of his protégés went on to become presidents of other institutions. Meanwhile, a female athletic coach, also imported, was exposed (by *Sports Illustrated*) as a lesbian predator. (At the same time, our police chief, also an import from Illinois, was earning his place in the slammer, while the press was enjoying a field day exposing the corrupt Southern religion of Jim and Tammy Bakker. Jim was from Michigan, Tammy from Minnesota, and few of their "parishioners" were Southern natives.)

THERE WAS A TIME when students came up to college fresh and unsophisticated from the boondocks. But they had a telluric connection with Western civilization. They knew the King James Bible, something of the history of their family in the great events of this continent, and natural "country" music before it was commodified. They were capable of an identification with and sometimes even a passion for the great works of our past. Sometime in the late 1990's I began to notice the widespread, if not universal, absence of this ability to enter into Western civilization.

All the old favorites of the American history lecture room—George Washington accepting the command of the Continental Army while refusing pay; pioneers selecting the site for their home and fields; flatboats piled with cotton making their way down the canal that the students saw every day—no longer struck for most any spark of recognition or identification or interest whatsoever. History was another universe that they had neither the desire nor the imaginative ability to enter. Even when confronted with real material—reading the Declaration of Independence, for instance—they tended to repeat the rote p.c. answers that they had learned were expected rather than to interact with what was before them. Many, however, while students, lived better than working-class families. Let's say nothing about the pervasive corruption of morals, which Tom Wolfe has described well in *I Am Charlotte Simmons*. Mammas, don't let your girls grow up to be college students.

By the time I retired, freshman/sophomore students in the American history survey could not do one third of the work that had routinely been assigned in the early 1970's, and even that much they considered as oppression. And many thought that studying meant memorizing the answers to the test, to be given to them in advance. (The answers, not the questions.) There are exceptions, of course, and the mass of young people can hardly be blamed. They are victims. They have already endured a lifetime of trivial American mass media and 12 years of Deweyite education designed to expunge everything of cultural value from their consciousness. Why be interested in reading when your previous experience consists of nonbooks about Martin Luther King, Jr., global warming, and the wholesomeness of sodomy? MTV—which, after all, is brightly colored and ever moving—is much more attention-getting, and the soaps have something remotely resembling real stories and people. While this decline was going on, the administrators were bragging to the public that they were constantly raising standards. The simple fact is that vast numbers of young Americans live in a post-literate culture.

One key to the decline is "course revision." Again and again, I have seen solid, successful, traditionally required courses trashed and replaced by trivial or tendentious ones. This is always done in the name of "providing the students with what they need in these changed times." But somehow, students are never, ever asked for input into what they find really useful. It is useless to oppose this, because if blocked one year it will be back the next as a project of those who have no scholarship or devoted teaching to fill their time. It is all a matter of faculty hobbyhorses and the newest fashions. It is heartbreaking to see very able graduate students refused admission, crushed, or made devious by 60's tenured radicals who are much less able and dedicated than the students. Rather than future masters of the discipline to be nurtured, the graduate students become instruments of the professors' egos. And we have a proliferation of historical dissertations like *The Oppression of Chi-*

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nese-American Laundry Workers in Cleveland, 1893-1911, and *Changing Consumer Preferences in Los Angeles Shopping Malls, 1945-1960*.

But if the colleges are designed to create new generations of liberals, then they are now largely failing at that. There are the usual leftists among the student body, but they are generally red-diaper babies or limousine liberals before they get to college. Most students are either apathetic and deracinated or have imbibed the idiot Bushite/Limbaugh nationalism of their parents—the only alternative they have ever been shown to discredited liberalism. The more intelligent see through the shallowness and intolerance of the faculty and give back the answers they know are required, realizing that those answers do not match reality, that "education" is an annoying required obstacle that is to be got through as painlessly as possible.

Perhaps the most evil thing about the state of American education is its demoralization and alienation of the talented minority in a society desperate for quality leadership. This is societal suicide.

I have already admitted generalizing recklessly in this lamentation of a memoir. This is a big country, and it is possible that there are conditions and trends in other places that contradict what I have experienced. Even in poisoned institutions there are professors who are kindly, fair-minded, and really committed to their scholarly disciplines. But a number of our greatest artists—Randall Jarrell, George Garrett, Tom Wolfe—have perceived and portrayed the sad quotidian reality of the professoriate in our time in ways much more truthful than official blather. The fact remains that American higher education, starting at the top, is a rampaging cancer on the body politic, made ever more virulent by the immense resources it consumes.

What the great expansion of "higher education" in the last half-century has mainly achieved is the empowerment of a host of conceited, pushy pseudo-intellectuals—alas, an all-too-common American type. American public discourse can achieve no common sense about any vital matter—war, healthcare, the environment, race relations. This is largely because of the distortive input of special interests but also because of the noisy interference of a host of people with that little learning that is a dangerous thing. Some perceptive historian of future days may well decide that the once-free America perished of a surfeit of false and shallow learning.

Clyde Wilson has taken refuge in the Dutch Fork of South Carolina, where he hopes to recover from a half-century's exposure to higher education.

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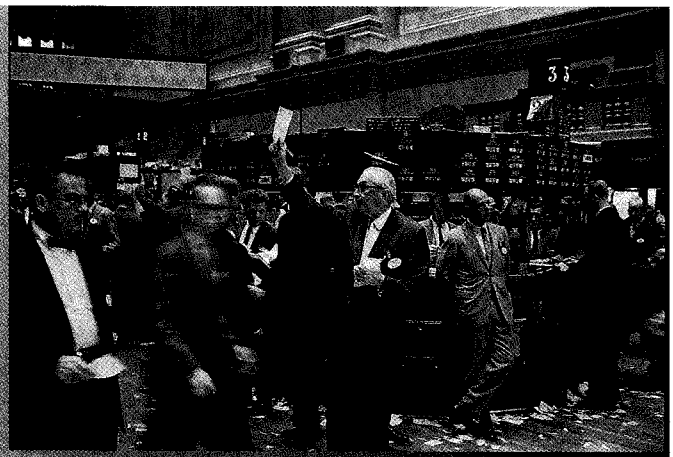

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The Quest for Certitude

by Jonathan Chaves

I MUST THANK YOU sincerely for your extremely thoughtful gift of *Saturday* by British novelist Ian McEwan. I have read the book with great interest and enjoyment. What is more, it has sent me back to "Dover Beach," which it uses so creatively, and to Matthew Arnold in general, with a new perspective. You can have little idea how difficult it is to elicit such a response in me. I usually march entirely to the sound of my own drummer and take little to no advice on what to read.

On one particular question I would like to share some thoughts with you. It might be best, though, if you'd first take a few moments to read another poem by Arnold, his "Rugby Chapel." This is a poem about his late father, who was a pastor in the Church of England and is now buried in this chapel.

McEwan, in his brilliantly written novel, is entirely one with his generation of intellectuals. That is partly why he is able to "show us the way we live," as a *New York Times* critic noted. And yet the truly great writers have been those who have in some way been able to transcend their times, because they have looked to something beyond. McEwan makes no bones about being a philosophical "materialist." (It is fair to assume he is at one with his character, neurosurgeon Dr. Henry Perowne, in this regard.) Thus, although momentarily uneasy about the People's Republic of China "giving materialism a bad name" (*materialism* here does not mean yearning for material objects, but rather the Marxist-based philosophical position that only matter exists; there is no such thing as spirit), he can nevertheless express his "faith" that, sooner or later, science will indeed discover the material nature of human consciousness.

So it is not surprising that, for McEwan, Arnold's "Dover Beach" looks like an early expression of what has become the standard view of moderns: The "Sea of Faith" has receded, leaving only the "darkling plain" of "confused alarms"—that is, strife and conflict. The only thing we can count on is love for each other. And thus does Henry feel as he lies beside his wife, Rosalind.

But now, consult "Rugby Chapel." At the beginning "Coldly, sadly descends / The autumn evening," but by the end the poet is able to envision humanity, inspired by the examples of such men as his father and the great ones of the past of whom his father causes him to think with renewed faith, marching "On, to the city of God."

Is Arnold contradicting himself—in "Dover Beach" depicting man as on his own, while in "Rugby Chapel" showing him as still having a transcendent goal to look toward with hope? I think not. McEwan's quite remarkable use of the former poem in his novel causes us retroactively to read it as a presentation of the full modernist position—already pretty well decided—whereas the latter poem, I think, causes us to interpret "Dover Beach" as very precariously and delicately poised between tradition and modernity. The poet hears the "long, withdrawing roar" of the "Sea of Faith"—but a sea that ebbs may flow up again. It may be that "the world . . . [h]ath really" no "certitude," but the possibility, dimmed of course, remains that there could be truth. (I should note that there were of course exceptional Victorians of unquestioned Christian faith, such as the great John Henry Newman, or the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, S.J., as indeed there are believing Christians even among today's thinkers and writers.) From no certitude, in Arnold, we pass to certitude that there is no transcendent truth, in McEwan.

And these differences, or rather different points on the historical timeline, mirror precisely different stages in the loss of faith that afflicts our age: The Victorians were losing faith, beyond doubt, but still somehow holding on to some semblance of it. Again, in "Rugby Chapel," note how the poet cries out to the "Servants of God!" but immediately wonders if he shouldn't call them "sons" of God. In orthodox Christian theology, as Arnold would of course have fully comprehended, God has only one Son, Jesus Christ, Who actually shares the divine nature with His Father and is thus God Himself as well as man, two natures in one Person. This is Theology 101, going back to the Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325). But the Victorian Arnold has probably already given up the idea that Christ is God; he is reserving the dim idea of a god in the background, which is closer to the deism of the philosophes (Voltaire in particular). We are well on our way to the virtual certitude that there is no God, period, which has long since been reached by the time we come to McEwan in 2005.

Best,

Jonathan Chaves

Jonathan Chaves is professor of Chinese in the Department of East Asian Languages & Literatures at The George Washington University.

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The Man Who Won the Revolution

EVERY HISTORY TEXTBOOK has a paragraph or more devoted to Crispus Attucks, who, besides being half black and half Indian and one of those killed in the Boston Massacre, was of little historical significance. Nearly everything else said about him is a matter of speculation. In these same textbooks there is no mention of Timothy Murphy, a real hero who could be called the man who won the Revolution.

Timothy Murphy was born in Pennsylvania in 1751 shortly after his parents arrived from County Donegal, Ireland. The Murphys settled on the frontier, where land was cheap, but so was life. Indian raids were frequent and bloody. White families had to adapt quickly or be annihilated. By the time Timothy Murphy was in his mid-teens he had a widespread reputation for extraordinary marksmanship and fierceness in battle.

In June 1775, Murphy and his brother John enlisted in Capt. John Lowdon's Company of Northumberland County Riflemen. To qualify for service with the company, a rifleman had to hit a seven-inch target repeatedly at 250 yards—remarkable shooting even with the finest Kentucky rifles. Lowdon's company of crack riflemen was soon ordered north.

Murphy fought in the Siege of Boston, then in the battles of Long Island and Westchester. By 1776 he was a sergeant in the 12th Regiment of Pennsylvania Line and fought at Trenton, Princeton, and New Brunswick. In July 1777 he was transferred to Morgan's Rifle Corps, led by the legendary Daniel Morgan. Colonel Morgan and his corps were ordered north to join the American forces opposing Gen. John "Gentleman Johnny" Burgoyne and his British army, which had invaded New York *via* Canada.

The armies clashed on September 19 in the First Battle of Saratoga, or the Battle of Freeman's Farm. The British prevailed, but not decisively. The forces met again on October 7 in the Second Battle of Saratoga, or the Battle of Bemis Heights. Early in the afternoon, a British column led by Brig. Gen. Simon Fraser seemed ready to flank the Americans. Maj. Gen. Benedict Arnold, still on our side, rode up to Colonel Morgan and said that it was up to his corps of riflemen to thwart the British advance. Arnold then pointed to Fraser in the distance and said that the British general was worth an entire regiment.

Morgan called for Sgt. Timothy Murphy, his finest sharpshooter, and declared, "That gallant officer is General Fraser. I admire him, but it is necessary that he should die. Do your duty." Murphy climbed a tree that afforded him a good view of Fraser, mounted on a horse more than 300 yards away—supposedly well beyond the range of even America's frontier riflemen. While Fraser rallied his troops, Murphy rested his rifle in a notch on a branch, reckoned the distance, the wind's direction and velocity, and the number of feet his bullet would drop. He adjusted his aim accordingly and fired. Fraser dropped to the ground, mortally wounded.

Francis Clerke, Burgoyne's aide-de-camp, galloped onto the field to take command. Murphy fired again, and Clerke fell from his saddle, dead. Watching two commanding officers killed from an impossible distance caused the British troops to lose their nerve, and they began to break ranks. Seizing the initiative, the Americans attacked. Nearly 500 British soldiers were killed, and 700 wounded. Gentleman Johnny and 6,000 others were captured. Only 90 Americans were killed, and 240 wounded.

The unexpected American victory convinced the French that the American colonists could defeat the British and win independence, if aided by France. This was the moment that many in France had been waiting for: a chance to revenge the loss of their New World empire to Britain in the French and Indian War. Without the aid of France, it is highly unlikely that we could have won our independence. And without the marksmanship of Timothy Murphy, it is equally unlikely that we would have stopped the British flanking movement and won the battle.

Murphy fought heroically through the rest of the war and was even at Yorktown for the surrender of General Cornwallis. There was little that Murphy missed.

In 1929 the state of New York erected a monument at the Saratoga battlefield dedicated to Timothy Murphy. There to speak at the dedication was the New York governor, Franklin Roosevelt. He said,

> This country has been made by Timothy Murphys, the men in the ranks. Conditions here called for the qualities of the heart and head that Tim Murphy had in abundance. Our histories should tell us more of the men in the ranks, for it was to them, more than to the generals, that we were indebted for our military victories.

◆

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The Daughter of Time

THERE ARE MANY familiar signs that one is growing old, but I would like to propose a new candidate for the list. You know you have lived a long time when ideas and theories that would once have been regarded as fatuous nonsense suddenly become respectable and mainstream.

Earlier this year, the British government finally admitted that the 1972 Bloody Sunday killings in the Northern Irish city of Derry (Londonderry) were unjustified and unlawful, and apologized to the families of those slain. British soldiers might even face criminal charges for their actions on that day. In itself, the apology might not seem remarkable, given the blatant nature of the acts: You need have no sympathy for the IRA to recognize Bloody Sunday as a callous massacre of noncombatants. But this official reinterpretation now joins an alarmingly long list of similar rethinkings of events during the Troubles. And in virtually every case, the view that has now become incontestable orthodoxy would, if expressed at the time, have been regarded as bizarre, flaky, and absurd. The conclusion is disturbing. At least in the Irish case, if you tended to believe lunatic conspiracy theories about official behavior, you were likely to be proved correct more often than if you held fast to the sober consensus of mainstream society and media.

Bloody Sunday was critically important for the subsequent development of the crisis in Northern Ireland, as it drove thousands of Catholics into the arms of the IRA, giving a huge boost to a violent campaign that would simmer until 1998. But what exactly happened in Derry that January day? Official statements suggested British soldiers were returning fire by IRA guerrillas and in the process killed both innocent bystanders and some actual terrorists. (Miraculously, the British took no casualties from the supposed Republican assault.) Alternative theories suggested that some soldiers lost control and fired wildly—or, more sinister, that British forces deliberately killed civilians in order to provoke the IRA into an open firefight. At the time, mainstream British opinion and mass media gave no credence to these critical views and placed the blame wholly on the IRA—an interpretation that a searching recent inquiry has now utterly discredited.

The official history of Bloody Sunday thus joins the other gutted orthodoxies that now rot in the landfills of history. It lies alongside such once officially cherished truths as the unquestionable guilt of the dozen or so innocent men and women falsely convicted of a series of lethal terrorist bombings on the British mainland. And as in the Bloody Sunday case, anyone who might at the time have raised doubts about the fairness or decency of British justice would have been marked irrevocably as a terrorist sympathizer.

I am not, of course, arguing for the invariable truth of conspiracy theories, still less that terrorist investigations inevitably target the wrong suspects. But the Irish cases do illustrate the twisted workings of officialdom and, especially, how media in advanced Western countries report political crime.

A case in point. In December 1972, the Irish parliament was debating a fiercely controversial law that would have vastly enhanced police powers to suppress IRA activities. The bill would certainly have failed, had not a car bomb detonated in Dublin on the very night of the vote, killing two bystanders. The new law sailed through a terrified Dáil Éireann by a vote of 69 to 22. I recall hearing of the bombing from the BBC, when a news anchor breathlessly pronounced, "Tonight's bomb in Dublin. Is there *any* doubt that the IRA was responsible?" As a mere college student, my first response was rather to note that the IRA were the last people in the world with an interest in perpetrating such a self-destructive outrage. The attack was much more likely to be a provocation by British and/or Irish security agencies, and subsequent investigations have strongly borne out my uninformed interpretation.

Now, I am not boasting of my great perspicacity here, but rather asking how, conceivably, mainstream media could believe such arrant nonsense. Generally, editors and journalists are neither idiots nor rogues, but they do operate in a culture where they rely on official agencies and sources for their definition of the news, and how that news should be understood. Over time, media people come to see the world through the eyes of their informants and frame their reporting accordingly. What they forget is that those agencies are not objective but have a powerful interest in avoiding blame for their blunders and crimes.

However honorable their intentions, the media tend to serve as official platforms for friendly agencies and their opinions, and they denounce any rival view as absurd and conspiratorial. Overcoming those constraints can take a very long time indeed. ◆

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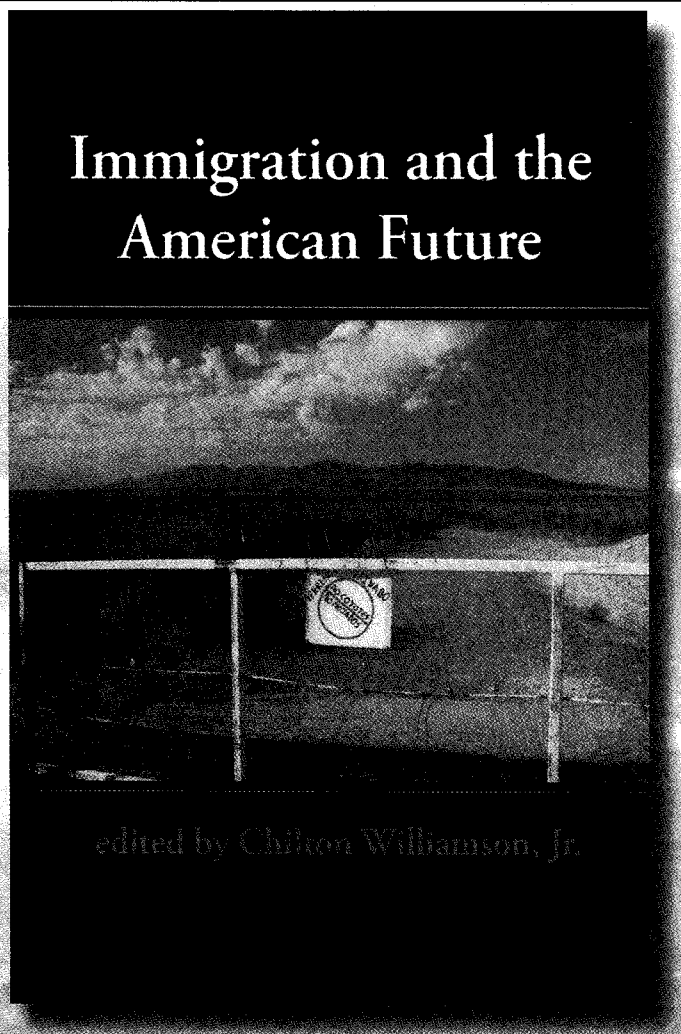

IMMIGRATION AND THE American FUTURE

EDITED BY CHILTON WILLIAMSON, JR.

14 HARD-HITTING CHAPTERS

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"Can immigration be expected to change America for better, or for worse? If we accept at face value President George W. Bush's claim that terrorism represents the gravest threat to America, as indeed it may, then we must ask ourselves whether terrorism, by itself, is capable either of obliterating the United States as—say—Rome eradicated Carthage from the map of North Africa, or of destroying it by effectively replacing the existing nation on what historically has been American soil with another and different nation. If the answer is "No," then we must agree that the terrorist threat is in fact a subset of the immigration one—and that **mass immigration is a greater threat to the survival of our country than any terrorist campaign possibly could be**. Which, it seems to me, is saying a very great deal about the dangers posed to the United States by mass immigration."

—From the Foreword, by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

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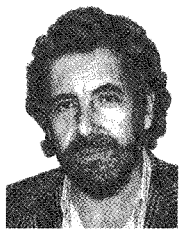

Retreat From Eden II

Last summer the inimitable Taki and I were staying under the same roof at the London house of our friend Natasha. I have loved our angelically guileless hostess for a quarter of a century, Taki since she was a baby, but all this is just a pompous way of relating that, like I this fateful summer, some months earlier Natasha had had a life-threatening brush with the heirs of Hippocrates. I recounted my Italian experience in last month's column. Natasha's had taken her from London to Los Angeles, where she was successfully operated on by a world-class luminary of a surgeon at the cost of $60,000.

Then there was the postoperative care, and that is really why I've mentioned Taki's compatriot. Hippocrates was probably spinning in his grave. The postoperative care at Cedars-Sinai—in other words, a nurses' station within the patient's yelling distance—had cost our friend, or else her private insurance company, $60,000 a night. That is to say, the same amount of money that a one-of-a-kind luminary of a surgeon had charged Natasha for performing a complex lifesaving operation of several hours' duration. After three nights Natasha moved into a suite in the Beverly Hills Hotel and engaged a team of private nurses to look after her, whereupon, by comparison with Cedars-Sinai, as guilelessly she put it, "all of a sudden it felt like everything was free."

Anyway, I have now totted up the cost to the British taxpayer of saving your columnist from certain death, and at Cedars-Sinai rates that figure is three million dollars. Apart from the biopsy of an infected vertebral disc carried out by a world-class specialist, three MRIs at $1,500 a pop, and innumerable other X-rays, ultrasounds, scans, and tests, this included an entire month's hospital stay. I came to the National Health Service hospital off the street, I am not insured, and my only fixed address is in Sicily, yet salvation, in the socialist paradise which, a generation ago, had been Aneurin Bevan's vision of Britain, did not cost me a penny.

Let me tell you about the stay itself, which from the start reminded me of the definition of luxury that Kipling had brought back with him from India—namely, being shaved in his sleep by a manservant who would creep into his bedroom at the crack of dawn, razor and foaming brush at the ready. The black, Puerto Rican, or possibly Mexican nurses of Cedars-Sinai costing $60,000 a night had nothing on St. Mary's Paddington, where the white, Anglo-Saxon, and possibly even Protestant woman who cleaned my bedside table every morning asked me in the tones of subservient hauteur we know from the upstairs-downstairs kind of black-and-white English film, "You do like having your fountain pen to the left of the flower vase, don't you?"

I kid you not. I lay in bed all but immobilized, yet every week my life-affirmingly lucrative column for the Russian-language website *Snob.ru* had to be ready by Friday. The good nurses of Valentine Ellis ward outfitted me with a special pivoting table for my computer, so that their patient could type away, more or less with his nose, in the best tradition of handicapee weepies. Laura, the Rumanian from Pharmacy, she of the antibiotic supply, insisted on having my autograph on a prescription blank, "so that I can paste it into one of your books later." And the Finnish beauty whom I met as she squeezed a yard of plastic tubing inside me, to let those antibiotics do to my spine what Mussolini did to the Italian marshes, came up with the one diabolically clever thing to tell me about cigarettes that I craved to hear so as not to smoke them again. Anu said smoking was a good thing, "but at *your* age it is *certainly* better than stopping."

I know I sound like a 1930's fellow traveler on Comintern propaganda steroids, extolling the virtues of the Soviet penal, education, and healthcare systems after a month's stay in an apartment overlooking Red Square. I know that, somewhere out there, there is a man with some phalanxes of his fingers missing, who could say a few things to disabuse me of my enthusiasm for the land of the rising sun. In fact, it is enough to open any British newspaper to a random page to be thus disabused, as horror stories about the National Health Service are a significant part of what journalism in England has been about since anybody can remember.

What can I say? I suppose I was lucky. Certainly I was not the poor sweet teenager who had died of criminally misdiagnosed meningitis, nor the housewife whose untreated injury with a paring knife had put her in a coma, nor the old man who had come down with the flu and never got up. Yet are not all systems imperfect, are not all governments propagandistic, all newspapers sensationalist? All I know—and believe me, it takes some doing on my part to say this out loud—is that I owe my life to socialism. ♦

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Terminating an Unwanted Parentcy

by Kenneth Zaretzke

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF
THE UNITED STATES
On Writ of Certiorari to
the Court of Appeals
June 21, 2017

Justice Breyer delivered the Opinion of the Court.

SHEILA X IS A SINGLE WOMAN living in San Diego. Shortly after giving birth to a child, she received her Law School Admission Test scores. To her surprise, they were high enough to guarantee admission to an elite law school. At about this time it was discovered that the newborn had a previously undetected handicap—a hearing loss. In light of these new circumstances, Sheila X decided to pursue a legal career rather than immediate motherhood. She considered putting the child up for adoption. However, she determined not to do so because she anticipated those feelings of loss and bereavement which psychologists say are normal in women who follow through with gestation only to give the child away. Therefore, she consulted a physician, who agreed to perform a presumptively illegal early-life physician-assisted killing at a women's clinic.

Before her physician could effect the termination, a nurse working in the clinic informed authorities of the scheduled procedure, and the state attorney general obtained an injunction to halt it until various legal issues concerning the scope of physician-assisted killing could be resolved. The trial court upheld the ban on infanticide, and the court of appeals reversed. The appeals court reasoned that, while the California statute was a long-standing one, it was undermined by considerations of desuetude, notwithstanding relatively recent congressional prohibitions of so-called partial-birth abortion. The court held that desuetude—privileging the new over the old—had the quasi-legal effect of mitigating California's anti-infanticide statute, throwing its legality into question and favoring an understanding of the law opposite to the one expressed by the existing statute. The attorney general appealed to this Court, and we granted certiorari in order to resolve the profound legal dilemmas posed by this case.

I

THE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT of human beings is a marvel to behold but should not be confused with personhood. At three weeks after birth, the infant lacks every significant power of ratiocination except for the one for which dogs are famous: eye contact. This is not enough to give early-stage infants a protected legal status. It may also possess the ability to smile at this point in development, but the mere ability to smile without the ability to "follow up" with coherent communications is, in the judgment of many experts, not a significant sign of ratiocination.

The fact is that the infant at this early stage possesses no attribute that morally distinguishes it from a fetus. The mere fact that it has been born, whereas a fetus has not been born, is not clearly relevant. Whatever legal or pragmatic significance birth may be regarded as having, it is essentially a matter of geographical location, with no moral significance in itself. By contrast, the onset of meaningful verbalization, which occurs in late-stage infancy, is without doubt morally significant, for it demonstrates the infant's actual and present capacity for ratiocination.

Some so-called handicaps, such as severe hearing impairment in the present case, cannot be accurately diagnosed in the womb. Sheila X argued that this is a legitimate reason why a woman should be allowed to have a postnatal "abortion." The court of appeals agreed, holding that it follows from a reasoned appraisal of *Roe* v. *Wade* (1973) and *Planned Parenthood* v. *Casey* (1992) that women like Sheila X, and not the government or the society, have a fundamental liberty interest in their entire reproductive destiny, including basic decisions about the quality of life of their early-stage offspring.

Reproductive destiny is a vitally important part of our nation's justice-seeking Constitution. We most recently considered the principle of reproductive destiny in *Kansas* v. *Office of Women's Liberation of the Martha Nussbaum Equal Reproductive Values Association* (2013). We there held that, while the criterion of viability was previously central to our abortion jurisprudence, it is ultimately unable to ground the constitutional right to have an abortion. The reason is simple. If advancing technology were to push the stage of viability all the way back to implantation, it would destroy the very basis of the *Roe*-delineated right of a woman to terminate her pregnancy. That would be unacceptable. The new standard, we therefore held, must be birth itself. As we explained, abortion is allowable for any reason in the period before birth. After birth—or after the onset of labor—abortion may be prohibited.

As OWL-MNERVA makes plain, fetal viability must not be allowed to constrain the undue-burden standard. A woman may be just as unduly burdened by an unwanted pregnancy when the fetus is viable, or capable of surviving outside the womb, as when it is pre-viable. Thus, we said in OWL-MNERVA that "the constitutional command of reproductive autonomy necessarily entails that abortions be

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permitted, with a physician's approval, up to the point at which labor begins. Once the woman is in labor, the fetus is for legal purposes 'born,' and abortion may be prohibited in such cases, but no earlier." This standard, we held, is more reasonable than the previous standard—viability—in drawing a "bright line" for deciding when abortion is permissible and not unduly burdening the woman's reproductive autonomy.

Nevertheless, that decision did not completely encompass all the facets of reproductive destiny *qua* autonomy. And so, building on the rationale of OWL-MNERVA, today we decide that reproductive autonomy must be understood in light of the totality of family-planning decisions. Any limitation on those decisions prior to the time at which the woman is able to undertake an extra-uterine evaluation of the child constitutes an undue burden. Thus, the birth criterion, while unquestionably an improvement on the viability criterion, is inadequate to guard the full range of the woman's reproductive autonomy. It has the effect of unduly burdening the right to autonomy because, while it permits the woman to terminate a pregnancy, it severely limits her options for terminating a parentcy.

The logic of our abortion jurisprudence is clear and simple. Decisions about reproduction and family planning cannot be confined to prenatality; they must encompass the postnatal realm as well. The 14th Amendment compels this conclusion. That amendment specifically refers to "persons" under the law, and neither fetuses nor the youngest infants are persons. They lack any significant power of ratiocination. In the absence of meaningful rational capacity, we cannot regard the infant's life as constitutionally protected.

II

As Justice Thomas points out in his dissent, the so-called Western moral tradition distinguishes between abortion and infanticide to the detriment of the latter. We acknowledge as much, but we deny that common sense affirms a bright-line distinction between infanticide and abortion. Were it to do so, it would fall victim to the well-known sorites paradox. It is irrational to distinguish the moral standing of the fetus one day before birth from the infant one day after birth.

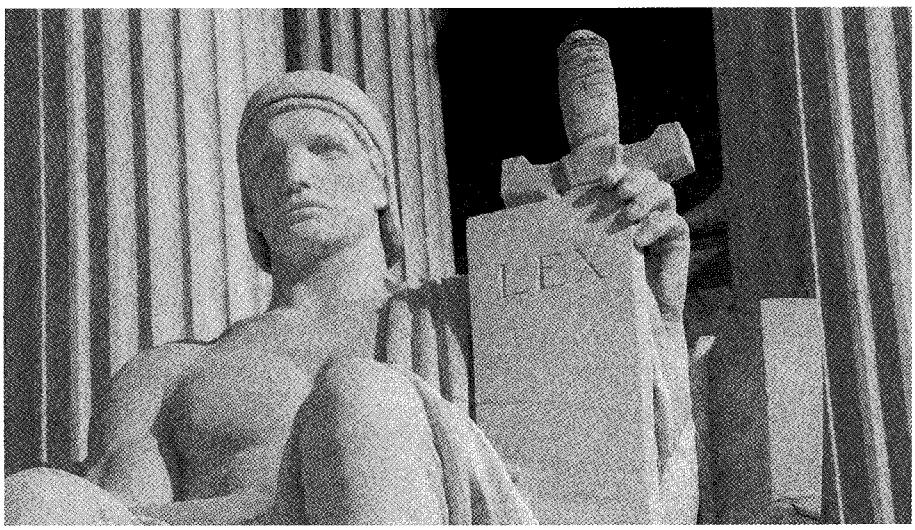
Thus, in light of *Roe* and *Casey*, and the undoubted permissibility of late-term abortion in *Doe* v. *Bolton* (1973), and bearing in mind the evolution of our abortion jurisprudence in OWL-MNERVA, we now affirm the constitutional permissibility of infanticide up to three weeks after birth. In so deciding, we overrule *Gonzales* v. *Carhart* (2007), which was wrong on the day it was decided. That decision, which overturned *Stenberg* v. *Carhart* (2000), is unfaithful to the precedent of *Doe* v. *Bolton* and to the long trajectory of our abortion jurisprudence, as well as to what the renowned legal scholar Ronald Dworkin calls the "majestic generalities" of the Constitution.

A woman's right to terminate an unwanted parentcy is thus constitutionally protected on both sides of the natal spectrum. Her constitutional prerogative of physician-assisted infanticide draws a line in the sand that is not to be crossed by the states. States can promote parentcy, if they wish, within today's "pulchritudinous parameters" *(OWL-MNERVA*, Scalia, J., dissenting). For instance, they can proclaim their interest in infant life by passing legislation that encourages the practice of prenatal as opposed to postnatal terminations.

Today's decision, we note, is not as sweeping as was *Roe* v. *Wade*. Our decision is minimalist, not deciding the issue of whether infanticide is a corollary of a woman's sexual freedom, as several amici urged us to hold—in which case access to infanticide would not be a liberty interest but a fundamental right.

Our opinion is also minimalist in not deciding whether fathers who seek to avoid the financial responsibility of rearing a child are entitled to make the decision to end the life of the early-stage infant when the mother opposes termination. The facts of the present case do not give rise to the issue of paternally demanded infanticide, and so we save for another day the vexed issue of whether the father may intervene in the infanticidal decision. However important that question may be for our infanticide jurisprudence, we hew today to the gold standard of minimalism in constitutional interpretation.

As well, our decision is conservative. We draw the line at three weeks after birth, long before the infant starts to speak, and even before many infants learn to interact by smiling. Justice Thomas's claim that we



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"do a nice job of equating liberalism with barbarism" is therefore erroneous. There is nothing particularly liberal about today's decision, and as for barbarism, we think it is a figment of Justice Thomas's imagination. The Constitution does not enact St. Paul's Christian creed.

III

We are aware that many people regard the right to life of biologically immature humans as inviolable and sacred. They are entitled to their views. Nonetheless, our duty is to protect the liberty of all, not to impose the morality of a few.

Our earlier decision in OWL-MNERVA is upheld to the extent that it stands for a consistently applied undue-burden test and for the value of reproductive autonomy. That decision is overruled to the extent that it severely constrains the woman's reproductive autonomy by ignoring the symmetrical relationship between pregnancy and parentcy.

A woman must be able to decide not only whether she shall be pregnant but whether she shall be a mother. The woman's right to terminate a pregnancy must not be distinguished from her right to terminate a parentcy. The 14th Amendment—spurred in this case by the doctrine of desuetude—commands no less. States may not declare pre-three-week-old infants to be persons, or treat them as having the constitutional rights of persons. No more can states do this than can they declare trees to be persons.

We emphasize that this understanding of reproductive destiny does not mean that women have *carte blanche* to terminate a parentcy. What we held in *Roe* with regard to pregnancy strictly speaking applies here in regard to parentcy broadly construed. The liberty interest of the woman is limited. In addition, the termination of the infant must be physician-assisted, even if this imposes a financial burden, and even though physician-assisted infanticide entails killing as opposed to merely letting die—a traditional moral distinction that this Court rejects, as we hinted in *Washington* v. *Glucksberg* (1997) and made clear in that decision's progeny.

As long as the woman has had a chance to evaluate the newborn, as well as her feelings about rearing it, she is not unduly burdened by being prohibited from killing it after three weeks. In drawing the line at three weeks after birth, we allow the states to assert their interest in protecting the life, no less than the health, of the newborn individual.

"The Court has spoken, and all must listen" (OWL-MNERVA, Scalia, J., dissenting). Within the limits decided upon today, the termination of parentcy—postnatal as well as prenatal—may not be absolutely prohibited. Within those limits, the ruling of the court of appeals is affirmed.

It is so ordered.

Kenneth Zaretzke writes from Seattle.

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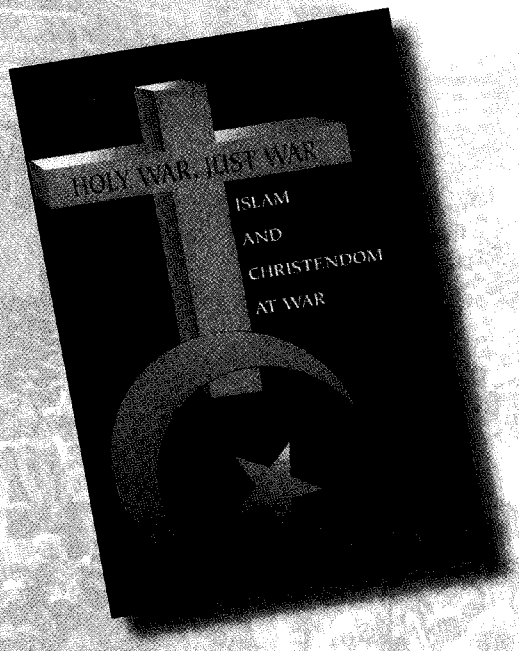

Holy War, Just War

Islam and Christendom at War

by Roberto de Mattei

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Advertising Himself

Inception
Written and directed by Christopher Nolan ♦
Produced and distributed by Warner Brothers

IT TOOK ME A WHILE, but I finally realized what Christopher Nolan's *Inception* is all about. Simply put, it's about how it got to be itself. Or, to be less gnomic, Nolan has undertaken to advertise his own moviemaking skills in a two-and-a-half-hour compendium of every popular film that has ever influenced him—beginning, it seems, with Buster Keaton's 1924 comic investigation into the nature of film itself, *Sherlock Jr.* What's more, he had Warner Bros. foot the bill at $160 million. Nolan's audacity is riveting; unfortunately, his film is not. It is a series of dazzling cinematic demonstrations that never add up to a compelling whole. Keaton did a better job of integrating effects and story at the merest fraction of the cost and with nary a computer generated image in sight.

Nolan's title signals what's wrong. In British usage, as the London-bred Nolan doubtlessly knows, *inception* means earning a university degree, particularly the doctorate. Watching Nolan's film is more than a little like witnessing an apt pupil take his oral exam in cinematics. The professors pose questions, and he aces one after another with recourse to his most recent project.

"What, in your opinion, Mr. Nolan, defines film *noir*?"

"Well in my latest work, I essayed *noir* with this scene of a dank, ochre-walled hotel room littered with wounded bodies *à la* David Lynch's *Blue Velvet*."

"If you would, give us your idea of a suitable climax to an action adventure."

"My answer is this sequence featuring a snowbound mountaintop redoubt guarded by skiers equipped with rattling AK-47s. Its *locus classicus* is in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*."

"What about the musical, Mr. Nolan?"

"I've got Edith Piaf on the soundtrack singing '*Non, je ne regrette rien*' with a reprise of Fred Astaire dancing on the walls and ceiling of his hotel room in *Royal Wedding*. Pretty nifty, no?"

"What of sci-fi out-of-body exploits?"

"Well, I went to *The Matrix*, of course, but I took its visuals further. I've got six characters caught up in a three-tiered collective dream outfitted with an elevator that occasionally descends into the protagonist's guilt-ridden subconscious."

"And what of surrealism?"

"I went right to Luis Buñuel's ambiguous indoor/outdoor setting from *Un Chien Andalou*, of course, but I wanted something showier. So I had this Parisian neighborhood yaw up until one avenue turns perpendicular to another one. I then had my actors walk to the vertical seam, where they continue on their way defying gravity as they stroll effortlessly onto the upended pavement. Crazy, huh?"

IN *INCEPTION*, Nolan has bits of film *noir* jostle with peppy musicals. Hitchcock bumps into Vincente Minnelli; Billy Wilder shakes hands with James Bond. Even *Mission Impossible* puts in a face-changing appearance. Nolan's 2006 film *The Prestige* was about magical illusions that confounded his protagonist and, perversely enough, his audience. Similarly, his 2000 breakthrough film, *Memento*, was interested more in mystifying its audience than in enlightening them. It's not entirely a surprise, then, that with *Inception* Nolan isn't telling a story so much as flourishing his magical gifts. It's as though he's not content with the unprecedented commercial success of his Batman films. He is serving notice of his intent to become imperial wizard of commercial filmmaking, the ultimate arbiter of our dreams. And he's well on his way. He is already making a new Batman movie, with a new Superman installment to follow in 2012, and he has announced he would like to make a James Bond film.

The story line of *Inception* parallels Nolan's designs on his audiences, both the general public and his industry's decision-makers. He seems compelled to prove he can do it all. This is both this film's glory and its nemesis.

The plot concerns idea thieves led by Dom Cobb (Leonardo DiCaprio) and Arthur (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) who earn their keep by breaking into the dreams of high-level executives and extracting secrets their competitors are willing to buy at extravagant fees. (If only Richard Nixon had had such a service! Had his plumbers plumbed the minds of the DNC members instead of their hotel rooms, Watergate would never have happened, Jimmy Carter would have stayed on his peanut farm, and we'd all be better off.)

THE FILM OPENS with Cobb discovering he has been detected by his latest mark, Saito (Ken Watanabe), a Japanese energy mogul. In reality, Saito is auditioning Cobb's team. He has a mission of his own in mind. This clever fellow doesn't want to extract information; he wants to

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plant an idea in the mind of Robert Fischer, Jr. (Cillian Murphy), the son of his major rival, the dying Maurice Fischer (Pete Postlethwaite). (Why would Robert be junior to Maurice? Another mystification?) Saito wants the son to come to the conclusion that it would be best to break up his father's corporation rather than running it as a global monopoly that would crush all rivals, including Saito's firm, and threaten the world with . . . what? We never learn, nor do we learn what energy sources are at stake. It's all a Hitchcockian MacGuffin.

Cobb agrees to the mission and establishes a team to carry it out, including a prize architectural student, the elfin Ellen Page in the role of Ariadne, who, curiously, never seems to spin much thread. Cobb needs her to design convincing buildings and interiors for the dreamscapes he will be using. In no time at all, they manage to enter Fischer's dreaming mind by means of drugs and what seems to be communal blood tubing—Nolan never bothers to explain how this might work—during a ten-hour flight from Sydney to Los Angeles, a rather airy contrivance. Dream time, of course, ticks by much more slowly than what clocks measure in the waking world, so the dream team has more than enough time to plant Saito's idea. But there are hitches. First, as Cobb foresees, Fischer's subconscious detects the presence of his team as the body would an infection and begins sending out the mental equivalent of white blood cells to attack the intruders. These white-cell equivalents look oddly like the standard-issue thugs who populate standard-issue action films, and they chase Cobb's team in gear-grinding vehicles, firing endless rounds of ammunition at them. There's also hand-to-hand combat, for those who appreciate action in softer decibels. Not to worry, though. It seems bullets and knives cannot harm you during a dream, although they do hurt as much as when you're awake. Who knew?

To keep things interesting, Cobb decides he must take Fischer from one subconscious level to another by means of smuggling him into dreams within dreams. Soon Nolan is juggling three—no, four—parallel narratives. Well, maybe five if you count actual reality, if it's not also a dream. Each narrative proceeds at its own pace, either contracting or expanding time. In a bravura display of montage, Nolan coordinates them so that they weirdly echo one another. Thus, at one just-so phase of the first-level dream, Cobb's agents sleep in a van that hangs perilously from a bridge, twisting and jerking over a river far below. Accordingly, in the next level, Arthur is in a hotel corridor that, despite its apparent stability, is actually gyrating in sync with the van, forcing him to recreate Astaire's aforementioned stunt, walking up its walls and across its ceiling.

ALL OF THIS elaborately orchestrated interplay of epistemological levels is carried off with the cold, self-satisfied calculation you would expect to witness in a magician mystifying his awed audience. This, I suspect, is why some have complained of the film's chilly intellectualism, but there is yet another element, and it's quite emotional. Cobb has hidden something from his cohorts. His dreams are haunted by his wife, Mal, who, in Cobb's imagination, is determined to disrupt his professional life. It seems she's quite peeved with him. A few years before, they had used Cobb's professional instruments to create a controlled dream idyll. Under its oneiric spell, they had constructed a private world for themselves founded upon their perfect love for each another. In their dreaming minds, this sojourn had lasted what seemed to be 50 years and became more real to Mal than what had been her waking life.

Cobb knew better. Determined to come back to the world of time and its responsibilities, he prevailed upon Mal to resume their waking lives. For Mal, however, reality had become a dreary illusion, sparking her continuing efforts to force Cobb to return with her to their former romantic felicity.

So, amid its thunderous explosions, aerial fistfights, and throbbing car chases, Nolan's film takes time to meditate on the most traditional of literary themes, the one that turns up famously and repeatedly in Shakespeare's sonnets and in Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn," to name but two instances: the longing for permanence in the midst of change and decay. Like Keats' urn that heralds the perfection of romantic pursuit by freezing it in its painting of youths pursuing one another—"For ever panting, and for ever young; / All breathing human passion far above"—Mal wants nothing less than to use the offices of art to rescue the dream of mortal love from the inevitable ravages of time. Her wish centers on a perennial temptation. Art's ability to render the fleeting permanent is, as Keats testified, sublime. Yet, while art can prolong passion's moment indefinitely, it does so only at the cost of ignoring reality. Mal seems not to have weighed this cost. Cobb did and found it prohibitive. Their different conclusions about the nature of art and life brought on their tragedy.

This is Nolan's one concession to the poignancy of life as we experience it in the so-called real world. But it's presented in such a fleeting, muffled manner that I suspect it will barely register with most viewers. Given the film's preoccupation with displaying its maker's varied talents, you can't help wondering if he included this strand as a throwaway to demonstrate that he could, if need be, make a film about tragic romance.

Nolan is a gifted filmmaker, but if he is to make a great film he will have to put his gifts in the service of a genuine passion. Meanwhile, we will have to settle for his entertainments. They're among the best available on our screens. ◆

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Sympathy for the Devil

His writing these last 40 years amounts to little more than a succession of malicious *ad hominem* attacks on people he disagrees with. His appeal is to those with a dirty mind, who want society to be as dirty as he is, and who are glad to erode barriers of decency. There is a coy prurience about him, and his work is a blend of boastful assertions and contrived self-debasements—all meant to please those he deems powerful and useful. He is, of course, Christopher Hitchens, scourge of Mother Teresa, religion, and the Almighty Himself, and he recently and dramatically announced that he was cutting short a book tour in order to undergo chemotherapy for cancer of the esophagus.

As a Christian who very much believes in God, I should be wallowing in pity for Hitchens and writing how much I hope he beats the dreaded disease. But in his case I shall remain neutral. Let the Almighty decide what to do with him; I am neither enjoying his discomfort nor praying that he beats the beast. As my friend the writer Mark Brennan said of Hitchens, "There is something awful about a man who hates God, cheerleading for sending those who love God, our troops, overseas, to die for the pagan god that is Israel and Big Oil."

I have known and clashed with Hitchens since I first laid eyes on him at a Southampton party over 30 years ago. I shoulder-charged him, knocked him down, and then, pretending that I had done it inadvertently, said sorry and walked out of the crowded room. His reaction was typical. He had his brother, a hack in England, write an item on a gossip page claiming that Hitchens chased me down the street and that I lost a Gucci shoe while running for my life. It was typical Hitchens, and I must admit I laughed when I read it.

Hitchens' social climbing is not a meager achievement. He likes to pretend that he is a bold iconoclast, that he ruffles feathers, that he takes on the high and mighty, but nothing could be further from the truth. He is careful whom he attacks and when. He acquired a certain amount of notoriety in sneering at Mother Teresa and the Pope. That's pretty easy stuff to do. A poor Albanian lady who spent her life trying to help the destitute and downtrodden poses no danger. Nor does the Pontiff. Those old bags at the *New York Times* like Maureen Dowd know and exploit this daily.

When Hitchens took on God, he must have felt very safe—until the cancer hit him, that is. Hitchens is a bully who will be rude to people while on television—as long as his adversary is in a studio 3,000 miles away. He screams insults and abuse at those who believe in decorum and do not sink to his level, like a priest whom he insulted nonstop during his *god Is Not Great* book tour. He will, on the other hand, never say a snide word about anyone on TV who might block his access. He will never offend any hostess of any standing whose parties he might be excluded from, and that includes even the most brain-dead females of D.C.

He has always impersonated and marketed the coolly detached insider, the outright cynic, the dissolute but lovable drunkard. What he really is in life is the great self-promoter, and there's no better place to promote oneself than in Washington, D.C., a place where self-promotion is *de rigueur*.

Our Christopher was dishing the dirt on anticommunists during the Cold War, and dishing it hard. Once the commies collapsed, Hitchens had to change course, and he did so by embracing war and the warmongers, the neocons. Needless to say, he, like his Jewish fellow travelers, has never served or even contemplated serving. Hitchens made his reputation by writing about the bad breath and penis size of anticommunists—or whatever other vital issues he was addressing when dishing the dirt on us. Does anyone feel troubled about the reputations of decent men and women that he sought to destroy? Probably not. His premature obituary in the *Times*, written by the egregious brown-noser David Brooks, called him a rare and precious jewel among us. Some jewel. The shame of the Hitchens era of American journalism will long outlive the little twerps who gave credence to this vile man.

But here at *Chronicles* we do not like to kick a man when he's down, although I have given in to my temptation. In reality I do not wish to see Christopher Hitchens suffer or succumb to his disease. What I'd really like is for him to discover the Almighty and change his wicked ways. But that's like wishing for the neocons to stop trying to get Uncle Sam involved in wars that Israel believes are in her interest. Hitchens is certainly smarter than John Podhoretz, and more worldly than William Kristol, but all three have the same morals and humanity. ◆

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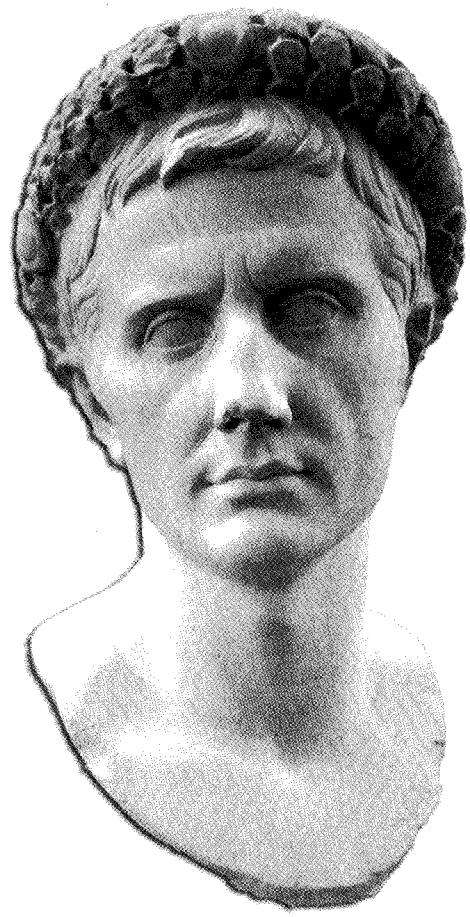

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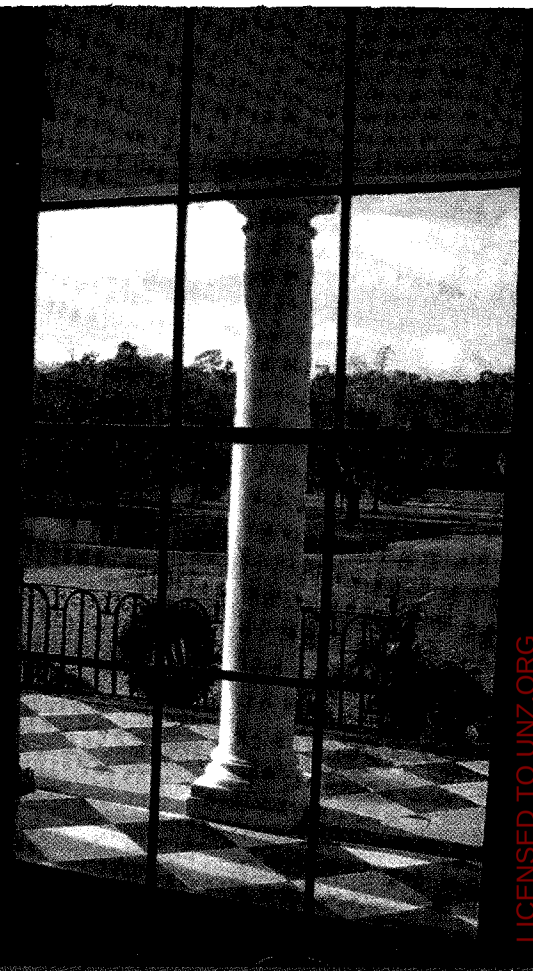

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